



MRS. JESSE MERCER BATTLE
(Laura Elizabeth Lee)

FORGET-ME-NOTS OF THE CIVIL WAR

A ROMANCE,
CONTAINING REMINISCENCES AND ORIGINAL LETTERS
OF TWO CONFEDERATE SOLDIERS.

BY
LAURA ELIZABETH LEE

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BRYAN BURNES

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By

MRS. JESSE MERCER BATTLE

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TO JESSE, THE HUSBAND,
WHO IS STILL MY BOY LOVER,
TO HELEN, THE DUTIFUL DAUGHTER,
WHO HAS BEEN THE LINK TO WELD MORE
CLOSELY OUR LOVE,
AND WHOSE LIVES I HAVE WANTED
TO FILL WITH SUNSHINE,
BUT WHERE THE SHADOWS HAVE OFTEN CREPT,
THIS VOLUME IS LOVINGLY DEDICATED.
MAY ITS PAGES BE ILLUMINATED BY THEIR
LOVE AND INSPIRATION.

LAURA ELIZABETH LEE.



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"The dainty architects of prose and rhyme
Have their brief niches in the Hall of Time;
But he is master of the deathless pen,
Whose words are written in the lives of men."

—WILLIAM H. HAYNE.

CHAPTER I.

MY ARRIVAL AT "WHITE OAKS."

On the twenty-sixth day of January, eighteen fifty-five, I first saw the light. The day was cold and raw, with snow flurries now and then filling the air.

It is not to be wondered at that my arrival was not more warmly welcomed, as it was the most unusual thing for snow to fall in that warm southern climate. Being the youngest of eleven children, also made the advent of another girl baby a source of indifference to the inmates of "White Oaks," the name by which our place was known.

The children were assembled for their noonday meal on this eventful day in the dining room where they were discussing the new baby and attempting the difficult task of finding a name, one that was not already in the family Bible or had not been in use in the family generations before. After many names had been rejected and scorned as unfit, Nealie cried out "Oh, let's name the baby Bettie!" The boys not caring one way or the other acquiesced immediately, but Flora implored them "No, no, not Bettie, call her Laura." While Rilia, then fourteen, and feeling quite motherly to all, declared they should compromise and call me "Laura Bettie," which suggestion quite satisfied them

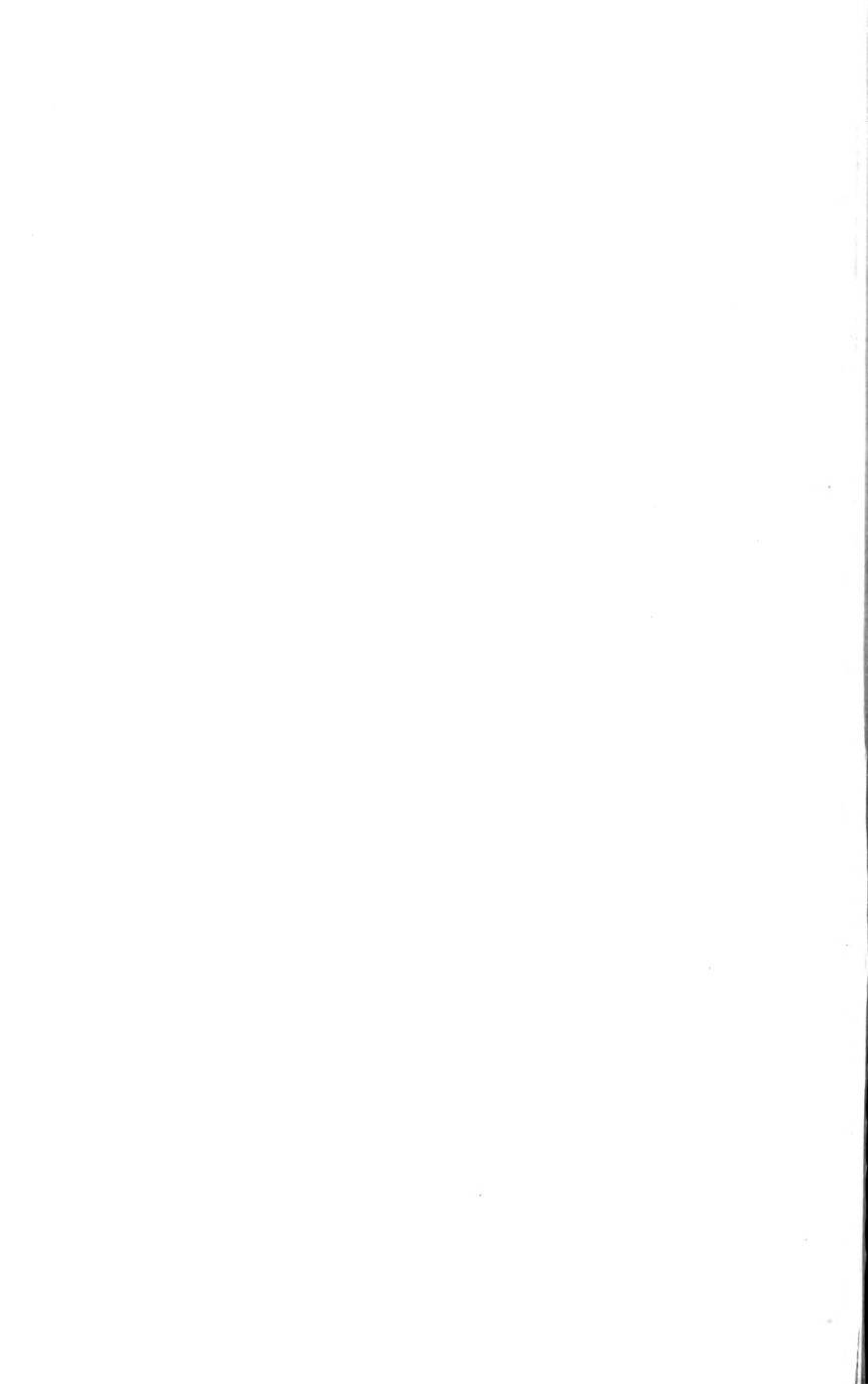
all, both boys and girls. Rilia was then deputized to visit the nurse, Aunt Pallas, and beg that this name be submitted to my mother, as pleasing all the children. She soon returned with the glad tidings that "Laura Bettie" would be enrolled in the old family Bible, which was well nigh filled, as "Laura Elizabeth," that being more suitable for me in later years, but she said "Lookee heah, chillun, you can call dat baby poah little ugly thing 'Bettie' or 'Laura,' but I'll do her laik I did 'Pussie' (her pet name for Cornelia), I'm a' gwine to call her Betsy." So it was settled by them, and from then on I was called by each of those names as each member of the family or friend happened to think of first.

Aunt Pallas, whom you will meet throughout the pages of this book, was a typical African in color, though her head was larger than the average negro, with the kinky hair growing low on her forehead, her eyes were very small, but lighted up by intelligence. Her nose was large and flat, and most decidedly gave the appearance of a full-blooded native of Africa. Her mouth was large, with full lips even adding to her homeliness. Her shoulders were square, the body and hips with straight lines like a man's. Her limbs were muscular and her stature, though short, was as erect as a young Indian's. She claimed that she made herself so by carrying pails of water on her head when she was a child.

"I declare before goodness," she used to say, "that Col. Johnnie Hinton bought my mammy from some niggah traders, dat told him mammy was a guinea nig-



"Aunt Pallas."



gah and b'longed to de quality, an dats why she called me Pallas—dey shore did get my name out of the dicshummary." Her homeliness was so marked that it really helped to make her attractive. Her age, like every other one of her race, was a problem we never could guess, except from bits of history that she would tell us. She remembered when George Washington died, and many incidents of the Revolutionary war.

Our large family lived on the farm called "White Oaks," near a small town called Clayton. The land my father planted in grain at that time, and as the soil was later found suitable for cotton he and the boys had hard times "making both ends meet." Two of the older boys had married, leaving the burden on him and the younger sons. He was well advanced in years at this time. My father was a typical Southern gentleman, with a courtly dignified bearing, and was well educated for the times. He was a descendant from that illustrious Virginia family whose lives have been recorded on the pages of American history since the Colony of Virginia first had a Secretary of State, and before his marriage had taught school in the town near his present home. It was there that he met and married the daughter of a wealthy planter and a large slave owner. Being an ardent abolitionist he refused the gift of a young negro man and his wife on his marriage to Candace Hinton. This refusal, coupled with his outspoken convictions never to own slaves, made him a target for the slave owners in that section. It is true that "Aunt Pallas" was a maid for his first wife, and was so devoted to her

that she was no more a slave than the wife, and was permitted to do exactly as she pleased. When the rumor spread abroad that Charles Lee was a rank abolitionist there were already war clouds that bid fair to darken the whole fair South-land; his father-in-law, Col. John Hinton, forbade him ever "darkening his doors." Whether the estrangement had anything to do with a decline in her health, the wife soon sickened and died, leaving behind her seven children, all except two greatly in need of a mother's love and tender care.

My father soon began casting about to find some one who would be a mother to his babies. He had known my mother as an acquaintance a few years, and his wife always spoke so kindly of her and her great beauty—that may have helped him to turn his footsteps toward her home. My mother, also named Candace Hawkins Turley, was a woman remarkably beautiful, but whose family was obscure, excepting her grandfather, Thomas Turley, who was a Revolutionary soldier when the war for American Independence began; he enlisted on the patriot side, and served from the beginning of the Revolution to the siege of Yorktown, at which place he was made an invalid for life by the bursting of a British bomb shell near his head. The story of his abduction when a baby, as handed down, made interesting family history; he was born in Ireland, and belonged to the Irish nobility. As was the custom in such families, the children were entrusted to white nurses, who became strongly attached to their charges. Thomas Turley's nurse hav-

ing decided to emigrate to America, could not endure the separation, and he was stolen by this woman and reared by her in America.

This child never knew the secret of his life until divulged by his old nurse on her deathbed. It was said that he did not know his own name, as this woman so much feared that her guilt might be known and the child restored to his seeking parents.

It is not strange that my mother's family was obscure with such a bit of family history. My father must have had in mind, to avoid another estrangement if he should attempt to marry again, another slave owner's daughter. That my mother married him for love goes without saying. My father then being over sixty years old, had that to his disadvantage, though his genial, kind nature, together with his scholarly attainments and his descent from an old Virginia family, no doubt added to his other attractions, and caused my mother to hasten to be the wife of a widower, now growing old, whose sole wealth was a ready-made family, excepting, of course, the farm of "White Oaks." It was even whispered then that he had consumption and would not live five years longer.

My mother was a woman so strikingly handsome that I shall not attempt more than a few words of description. She was an Irish type of beauty, above the medium height, with beautiful wavy brown hair, a broad low brow, a classical Grecian nose; her eyes of grey, were large and seemed unfathomable; her mouth a perfect cupid bow, and ruby lips through which shone pearl-like teeth, an oval face, with perfect

chin and ears, moulded on a neck of alabaster whiteness; her pink cheeks glowed with health, her complexion was marvellously fair, and the blue veins showed their delicate tracery beneath a skin of polished smoothness. A Madonna like face was my mother's. There was nothing insipid in my mother's beauty; it was a beauty of strength of mind, that shone out on her noble mien, whether the tradition in regard to her descent from the Irish nobility were true or not, hers was a face of such uncommon beauty that obscure birth could not hide the breeding and noble race from which she sprang. Her very carriage bespoke grace and dignity, with a firmness of purpose that once she had taken hold of the plowshare, it would take nothing less than victory to cause her to drop it. Still there was nothing obstinate in her appearance, only a resolute face and figure that radiated a beautiful character in every suggestion.



For, lo! my love doth in herself contain
All this world's riches that may be found;
If sapphires, lo! her eyes be sapphires plain;
If rubies, lo! her lips be rubies sound;
If pearls, her teeth be pearls, both pure and round;
If ivory, her forehead ivory ween;
If gold, her locks are finest gold on ground;
But that which fairest is, but few behold,
Her mind, adorned with virtues manifold.

—EDMUND SPENSER.

CHAPTER II.

SOME OF THE THINGS THAT HAPPENED.

Well, somehow, widowers are more expeditious in such matters, and after a very short courtship they were married, and Candace Hawkins Turley went to be mother and mistress of "White Oaks."

The time passed rapidly, filled with work and many cares, and in five years she was the mother of four children, three girls, one of whom died, and one boy.

They continued to live on the farm, though father had no turn for farming; the poor land and the large family made work enough for all, and a slave of my mother. The older children were sometimes required to look after me and their manner of amusing me was at times very peculiar. I was told that on one occasion when I was about ten months old father took mother to church, at "Old Liberty," five miles distant, Rilia, my half sister, and Nealie, the oldest of my mother's children, took me out to the barn where a pile of raw cotton had been thrown, reaching up to the ceiling. These sisters of mine, wishing to stop my cries for my mother, began to toss me up on the pile of cotton and let me roll down to the floor where they were carefully stationed to catch me. It gave me great delight, and I set up such crowing

and laughing that it gave such zest to the pastime that I began to laugh and crow louder. I suspect now that my brains were being well addled, but any way the more I laughed, the more I was kept tobogganing until in a careless way Rilia threw me up and I went clear over the top of the pile of cotton, rolled down and struck a beam on the other side. Immediately I set up such a scream that with great alarm they carried me back to the house where Aunt Pallas discovered a sprained wrist and a dislocated shoulder. It took hours in those days to drive five miles to church and return, so my cries well night drove my poor sisters wild, until my father returned and set the bones. My poor mother declared it happened just because she left me at home, and did not intend to ever do so again. Still she and father were good Baptists and could not resist the monthly meetings, at "Old Liberty" Church, and there were many other times when I was left behind.

On another occasion the older children had me in charge again, and decided upon another novel way of amusing me. We were all playing in a large room with a big high white bed in it. Nealie, after while, said: "Suppose we amuse Bettie by making pictures for her," then turning to me, she asked: "Wouldn't you like for sisters to make some pretty pictures for baby to look at?" I smiled and cried "Yes," whereupon the two held a whispered conversation and immediately they made a dash for the fire place, and placing their little white hands on the back of the fire place that was all

covered in soot, ran to the bed and began laying their hands on the pretty white counterpane trying to draw pictures of dogs and people. I was the audience and had a seat in the rear of the room, but not wishing to sit there, while such works of art were being placed before me, I up and toddled over to the bed and began to investigate. Imagine my consternation on seeing my sisters begin to turn black before my eyes, so I thought I'd rub the black off them, when lo, I began to turn black too. Well, in a short time the whole bunch of us were black and weird-looking. I was so frightened I could hardly speak when the door opened and father and my mother came in, and I think the rod was not spared, on seeing the snow white counterpane, covered in grotesque pictures and little finger prints, even the walls were decorated to suit the taste of the embryonic artists.

My first recollections of going to church at "Old Liberty" were of being dressed up and riding with father and mother in the barouche till we came to a deserted looking house, standing by itself in a big grove of trees. Then my mother led me around to the side of this house where a great many ladies and children were sitting down on a bench. After a while the door was unlocked and we all went inside. The men all sat to themselves on one side and the women and children sat on the other side of the room. Then they all began to sing such a sleepy song, I dozed off, but dreamily heard a man talking, and once in a while he would shout so loud I'd awaken with a start, to drop off to sleep again, my head resting on my mother's

lap. I awoke after a long time and saw a man handing a plate to everybody, to take something to eat, Oh! how glad I felt, but when my mother broke only one tiny bite and then ate that, without even looking at me, I was getting ready to weep, but when another man came up with a silver goblet and she took a drink and didn't look at me again, I gave one loud wail and begged for a drink too; not only denied that, but taken in her arms and toted out of the church, before everybody. Then the cookies were found and a nice gourd of cool water from the spring was given me, and we went back home. I was old enough to know why I was not permitted to partake of the Lord's Supper the next time I went to "Old Liberty."



A little elbow leans upon your knee,
Your tired knee that has so much to bear;
A child's dear eyes are looking lovingly
From underneath a thatch of tangled hair,
Perhaps you do not heed the velvet touch,
Of warm, moist fingers folding yours so tight,
You do not prize this blessing over-much,
You almost are too tired to pray tonight.

—ANONYMOUS.

CHAPTER III.

OUR REMOVAL TO CLAYTON.

One day when father had returned from the corn field my mother said to him, "Mr. Lee, I wish you would move to Clayton where we will be near enough to a school for the little children to go by themselves." "Why, 'old woman' (calling her by his pet name for my mother), "what shall I do with the farm?" "Rent it," said my mother, "start up the old saw mill in Clayton, build a home there for us to live in; I hear that a great many people are anxious to move there if they could only get the lumber to build with. We have plenty of seasoned lumber," she continued, "to build a home for us. Since some of the older children are married it makes the work too hard on you. The small children ought to be in school every day, and here we have to send them and send after them and many times the weather is so bad they don't go at all. If we move to town there will be no excuse for staying at home. When you have set up the saw mill and supplied everybody with lumber for building, you can take your money, and with some I had before we were married, start some kind of a mercantile business in this thriving little town. The rent from the farm will put us in easy circumstances. This money I have had for so long I intended to buy

with it a couple of young negroes to work this land and increase their progeny. Knowing your feelings I have nothing else to do but submit to your will, though it has been a long cherished dream of mine to use my money to buy slaves."

"Now 'old woman,' I decline to discuss this slavery question again. I will never own another slave (if you call Pallas such), and only pray that this talk among the Northern statesmen may not end without good results. No I will never buy a human soul with money," emphatically declared my father. "So talk no more about that, but your other proposition I believe is a good one, and I will go to Clayton tomorrow and see what I can do." My mother who had lived in town before her marriage and was never pleased to live on the farm, was delighted at the prospect of a change to town.

Father went to Clayton the next day, bought a lot and built a home and moved his family there within the next year.

Clayton was beautifully situated. Nature had been most lavish in her gifts. The hills, upon which the town was built, gave a most picturesque look to the undulating country for miles around, if the view had not been obstructed by the tall pines and majestic oaks that stood like sentinels to guard the lovely spot. Flowers bloomed perpetually though there came nipping frosts now and then which made malaria and fever give it a "wide berth." The atmosphere was always so dry that it gave one a feeling that it had just come from the hands of its maker, so pure and clean it appeared. The climate reached the happy

medium in winter and summer alike, it was never enervating, for the ozone from the pine forests and the oxygen that the grand old oaks set free gave health and rosy cheeks to the children that roamed around the little town. The streets were not paved, but like the beach drives at the sea shore, were hard and white, as if made of crystalline powder—and for racing purposes gave the horses a firm footing though cushioned and yielding. The water was noted for its purity and health-giving qualities. Take it altogether Clayton seemed to be about the “garden spot” of the “Old North States,” so far as what nature had done for it. On one side of the town were the “sunny banks of the rippling Neuse,” inviting alike to fisherman and picnicker. The other side was bordered by “Little Creek,” a limped stream filled with silver perch. Added to these charms was the old Academy for boys and girls, with its two large play grounds which had more to do with our removal there than anything that nature might have offered.

When father moved to Clayton, the mill did such a good business that he was kept busy for five years. In the meantime he bought pieces of land here and there about town and with the money he made from milling he bought a stock of goods and groceries and established a mercantile business.

The war clouds were growing blacker and threatened to end in something more than “talk.”

He continued to talk against slavery, and the slave owners began to fear that he might be a disturbing element if let alone. One day father received an anonymous letter, saying if he did not stop this talk

against slavery, that he would be "*tarred and feathered and ridden out of town on a fence rail.*"

He was then in very delicate health, and when he came home and told my mother about this note she was greatly agitated and said, "Why, Mr. Lee, what shall we do, move back to the farm or what in the world will you do?"

"'Old woman' I shall stay right here and do my work for I do not fear these men who are too cowardly to sign their names to the letter of threats."

"Oh suppose they should try to carry out their diabolical plot. I don't think we ought to stay here, really 'White Oaks' is the only safe place. Come let us move tomorrow."

"Never," said my father, very calmly but very firmly too. "I am not a coward, for I inherit a love of my country from my ancestors who helped to establish independence in these colonies, but slavery and its evils I foresee will precipitate another war for the freedom of another race. I do not fear these threats for the writers of this anonymous letter dare not do what they no doubt would like to do, for such a thing would be heralded from Maine to Texas, and my life, though a forfeit, would help to free the slaves, even sooner than I now think will be."

"Well, Mr. Lee, I can't help but fear all the same such underhand work. It is not the foe we meet face to face, but the enemy that slips upon us unawares," persisted my poor mother. "I dare not permit myself to think of this horrible deed without being alarmed and fearing for your safety. I shall keep a

close watch over you and not let you get far from me," insisted mother.

"Well, 'old woman,' this cough means that my days are numbered. I want to make my will and arrange all my worldly affairs, so as to give you as little trouble as possible. I want to leave you with the business in good shape, knowing your fine executive ability, so that everything will continue to run smoothly. I am resigned to God's will, but hate to leave you, my faithful wife, with the five small children." Here my mother began to cry, "Oh don't speak of leaving me and the children, I can't bear to hear you say it," and thereupon she broke down again.

"Well, 'old woman,' this is a matter of business; that you should know we are doing well in the store and the farm is paying better than I ever hoped for. Raising cotton has been more profitable, with the Jones tenants, than my poor efforts at raising grain ever were, besides bringing much higher prices."

However the days and nights were spent in horror to my mother, though she tried to hide it from father; the fear of those men doing that dastardly deed, and the knowledge that father was daily growing worse, made poor mother old before her time. I remember going day after day with her to the store where she sat and sewed, always near the door, and scanning every one as they came in, her face wearing a set look and a determined one, and I now think after more than forty years have passed that it was her presence, always near my father, that helped to hinder those fanatics from perpetrating that black crime.

We live in deed, not years; in thoughts, not breath;
In feelings, not in figures on a dial.
We should count time by heart throbs where they beat
For God, for man, for duty; He most lives
Who thinks most, feels the noblest, acts the best;
Life is but a means unto an end, that end
Beginning, mean and end to all things, God.

—P. J. BAILEY.

CHAPTER IV.

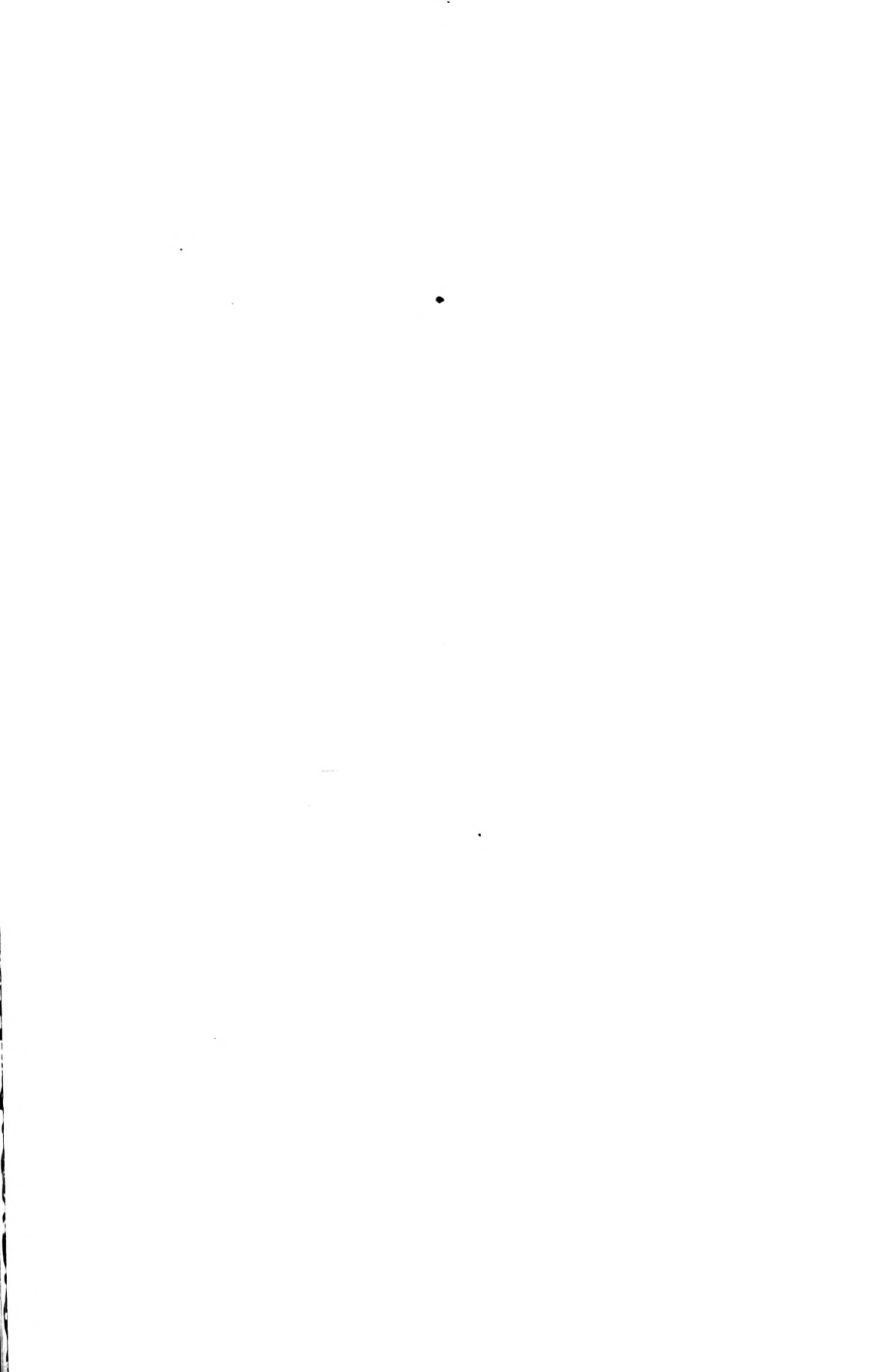
THE ATTEMPT TO "TAR AND FEATHER" MY FATHER.

My two half brothers, Walter and George, were as rank secessionists as my father was abolitionist. Though only fifteen and seventeen years of age, these boys had inherited from Col. John Hinton, their maternal grandfather, a desire to own slaves, and always declared when they were old enough that they would have negroes to work for them. Still the main reason for their being secessionists was that all their companions were drilling and talking of war all the time. Aunt Pallas having heard my mother tell of the note to my father, in which he was to be "tarred and feathered and ridden on a rail out of town," was so distressed that she told Walter and George to get out the old guns and put them in good condition, that they didn't need to go off to shoot Yankees on account of the trifling niggers. "I'll tell ye what we will do, when anybody comes round heah looking for Marse Charles we will take our guns and load up with powder and go out and fire 'em off, he! he! I'll be seized by cats, but dey nevah will try to ride any other gentleman on a rail."

The boys were so angry at the bare mention of such treatment for their good father that it was all

Aunt Pallas could do to keep Walter and George from putting in bullets to kill somebody. At last she persuaded them not to do it, still they "kept their powder dry" and waited.

One beautiful moonlight night some one came to our front door and knocked. One of the boys went to open it and found waiting outside a negro boy, owned by one of our near neighbors, who said "my master sent me to ax your daddy to come out to de store and let me have a bottle of castor ile, for brudder Reuben, he got de colok." Aunt Pallas had posted Walter and George that when they heard her singing, "My head got wet wid de midnight dew, honah de lam, good Lawd honah de lam," they might know that the posse were out after father. Before Walter had time to go to father with the message Aunt Pallas began to sing "Honah de lam" and both boys darted out to the place where the guns were hidden, and with Aunt Pallas leading the little army they made a rush for the big oaks, and standing back of them they began to discharge the old guns. At the first shot such consternation seized these villains that the whole posse stampered and such running as they did has never been seen before or since in that dignified old town of Clayton. Of course Aunt Pallas and the boys ran after them and continued to explode their powder, but so effectually did the explosions work that no more attempts were ever made on my father's life.



In war not crafty, but in battle bold,
No wealth I value, and I shun all gold.
Be steel the only metal shall decree
The fate of empire, or to you or me.
The generous conquest be by courage tried,
And all the captives on the Roman side,
I swear by all the gods of open war,
As fate their lives, their freedom I will spare.

—PYRRHUS.

CHAPTER V.

THE YEAR EIGHTEEN SIXTY-ONE.

The year eighteen sixty-one was ushered in with loud mutterings of war, and among my earliest recollections were those of seeing a body of men drilling in front of our home. These militia companies were being formed in every county, and the women and girls were meeting in halls or school houses for the purpose of sewing on flags and uniforms for the men and boys, that later became soldiers. Everywhere was heard the talk of war, even the small boys were hoping for the time to come when they might be allowed to shoulder a gun and go off to shoot "Yankees." One day on our way home from school, some one told us that Fort Sumter had been fired on, that was even unintelligible to me, but greatly pleased my brother George, for he threw up his cap and howled, "Hurrah for South Carolina, I am going to be a soldier now."

My father was so feeble that when Walter and George declared their intention of volunteering he could not show them by his arguments that they were wrong, and knowing, too, that his days were numbered, felt that only a short time and they would be at liberty to go to the war. From morning till night was heard fife and drum, or the talk of the citi-

zens that preparations were being made all over the South for a contest which would soon end in favor of States' rights. Shortly trains loaded with men going to enlist, and soldiers, kept the young people running to the depot to see the different regiments. Everyone had a flag which was waved as the trains passed our town. Sometimes they made no stop at the station, but the girls had notes of encouragement written and placed between split sticks, and as the cars went by the girls would throw their missives of faith and hope to these strangers. When the ladies were sewing on the uniforms the girls would write notes and put them in the pockets of the soldiers' jackets. In these they would write and beg the wearer to be true to his colors and his country, and never despair until the last Yankee had been whipped. Like "bread cast upon the waters" the soldier boys read and were inspired with courage to go on, and very many correspondences begun like that, ripened in later years into love and marriage.



And far from over the distance
The faltering echoes come—
Of the flying blast of the trumpet,
And the rattling roll of drum;
Then the Grandsire speaks in a whisper,
“The end no man can see:
But we give him to his country,
And we give our prayers to Thee.”

WILLIAM WINTER.

CHAPTER VI.

THE GALLANT FOURTH NORTH CAROLINA REGIMENT STATE TROOPS.

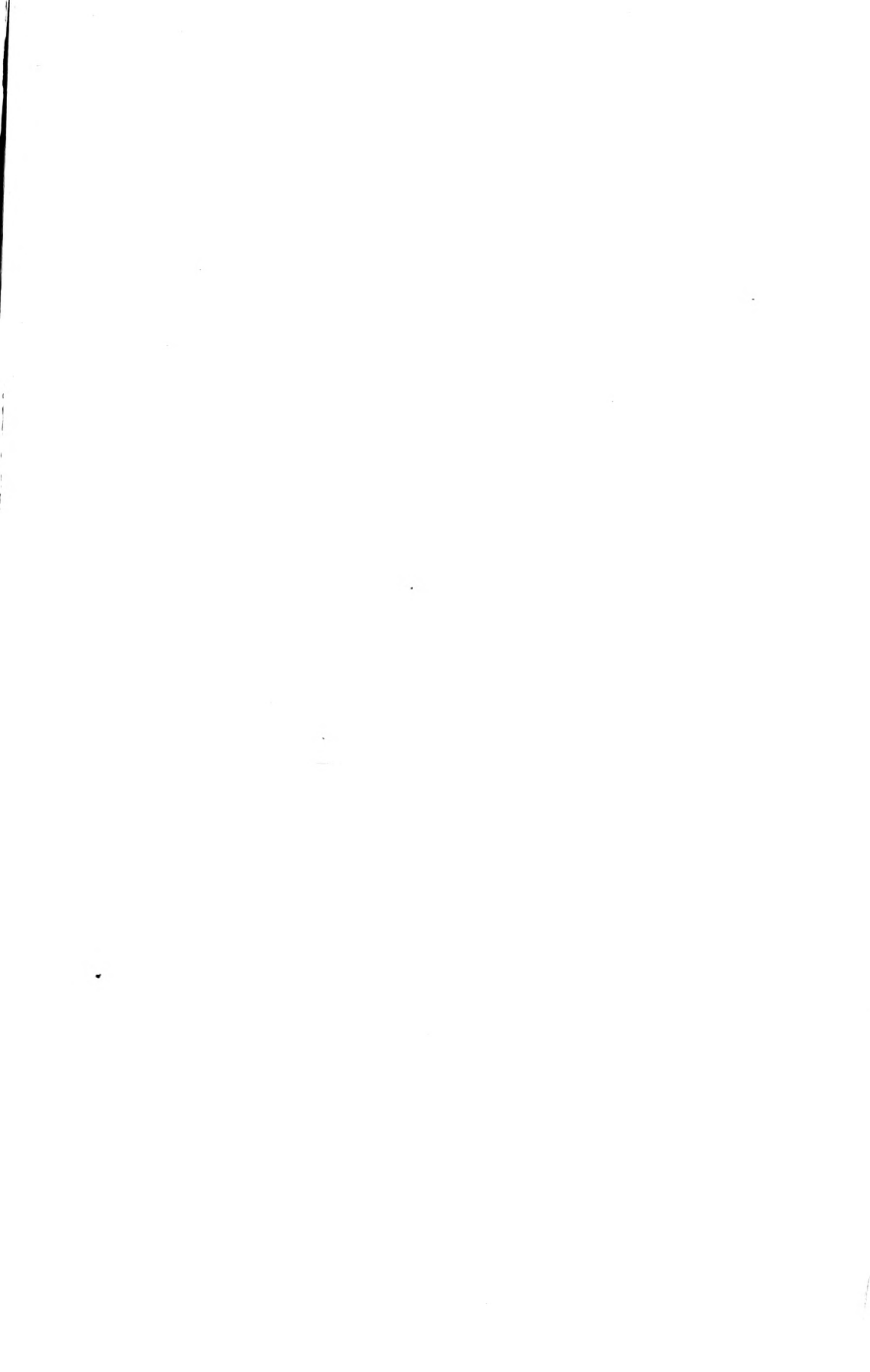
The day that the gallant "Fourth North Carolina Regiment" passed our town my half brothers, Walter and George, bade us all goodbye amid tears and hurrahs, bands playing and the crowd singing, "Shout the joyous notes of freedom" and off to the war they went. They had spent some little time at Fort Macon, but now they were on their way to Richmond and death. Some of their letters have been preserved up to this time; they were written on scraps of writing paper and sometimes cheapest wrapping paper. It may be interesting to publish them for future generations, to know exactly what two young Southern boys thought of war in the beginning, and how one, at least, throughout those terrible battles at Spottsylvania Court House, etc., lasted to give us such a vivid description of them, and I have written them verbatim from the original letters, and know nothing was exaggerated from their view point. This extract from the letter of a friend shows how fine looking and soldierly in bearing these brave men and boys of the Fourth North Carolina were considered by a

friend who saw them in Richmond soon after their arrival.

“The Fourth North Carolina Regiment” is the recipient of unmeasured praise for their deportment while on leave and their soldierly bearing in the ranks. In fact not a regiment has come from our state that has not elicited unstinted commendation for their fine appearance. It does me good to stand in a crowd as I did on Sunday when the “Fourth” passed through the streets and hear the hearty words of satisfaction expressed as to the material, the “Old North State” was sending into the field. Such expressions as “Did you ever see such determined looking fellows, steady, cool and resolute looking?” “What should we fear while such as these are between Richmond and the enemy?” I assure you I felt like giving one uproarious shout for the “Old North State” forever. I enclose you a rare curiosity, being the Federal version of the glorious battle at Manassas. It is a curiosity, inasmuch as no instance is known where a Lincolnite has put so many words together with so few monstrous discrepancies spicing the whole, and I have marked them, under the influence of the panic which such news created. A greater proportion of truth bubbled forth than usually characterizes their accounts of such disasters to their arms.”

Richmond, July 23, 1861.

ROBERTSON.



“Be of good cheer; your cause belongs
To Him who can avenge your wrongs;
Leave it to Him, our Lord.
Though hidden from our longing eyes,
He sees the Gideon who shall rise
To save us, and His Word.”

—MICHAEL ALTENBURG.

CHAPTER VII.

LETTERS FROM GEORGE AND WALTER.

FORT MACON, N. C., April 19, 1861.

Dear Mother:

Our company arrived here this morning at 8 o'clock. We had to stay at Beaufort last night, the water being too rough to carry us over last night. I intended to have written last night while at Beaufort, but we were so completely worn out with hollowing, etc., that all of us got to bed as soon as possible, which was about 12 o'clock. We have been employed a little while this morning carrying barrels, etc. It was raining the whole time. They make no difference here for rain or anything else.

There is only about two or three hundred men here as yet. There are more men expected daily. Our company is the largest, the best looking (so said by the men here), that there is in the Fort.

George and Tom Stith are down on the beach shooting porpoises. I had to borrow this piece of paper to write to you, George having the paper in his valise.

The company has this evening to look around. Tomorrow we have to commence drilling. George has just come in. He says he had lots of fun, and told

me to tell you that he would write to you tomorrow. He found a good many curious looking shells, which he has put in his valise, to carry home. Blake asked me to say to Mr. Rhodes that he was very well satisfied, indeed. The whole company is enjoying themselves very much. I will write to you again as soon as I hear from you. Please write to me often. Direct to Fort Macon, care of Capt. Jesse Barnes. Your affectionate son, till death,

WALTER.

FORT MACON, N. C., April 28, '61.

Dear Mother:

As there is a man going by Clayton tomorrow I thought I would write you a few lines, to let you know how we are getting along. We are enjoying ourselves as well as can be expected. We had prayers and singing this morning by Mr. Cobb. He spoke of the injuries of the South in an eloquent manner.

For the last day or two we have been living on the victuals that the people sent down here. The first few days we had bread, butter, etc., but as they have given out we live on bread, fat meat and coffee. If Blake does not tell you, I wish you would please send Walter and me a cooked ham and some biscuits, with a few of those small round cakes, for the cakes that are sent down here for the company are usually taken care of by the officers and are hardly seen by the privates. Walter is upon his bunk enjoying himself finely and sends his love to you. I am going to try to get a furlough to go home before long, for I long to be home



George.



with you all. * * * I forgot to tell you that we did not have to drill or work either this Sunday like we did the last. You spoke of sending a mattress down to us, but you need not for we are getting along very well. We are ordered to stay down here three months without lief to go home in the meantime, so Col. Tew says. Believe me as ever

Your loving son,

GEORGE. . .

CAMP HILL, N. C., July 9, 1861.

Dear Mother:

We arrived here about night, the day we left Wilson, and having raised our tents prepared to get supper, which we got about 9 o'clock. We are encamped in an old pine field, which is very hot, but the other companies that were here before have a very pleasant oak grove on a hill. The Second regiment, under Col. Tew, are on the opposite side of the road. Our Col. Anderson is a fine looking man, about six feet high, large and muscular, but not corpulent; a high, broad and intellectual forehead, bold face, and whiskers (shaped like Walter's), about a foot long.

It is different with us here to what it was in Fort Macon and Newbern, as we are now the same as regulars. We have to come under the general regulations of war. I do not think that we will leave here for some time yet, as the whole regiment has to be uniformed with state dress. We have not received anything, and have only drilled this morning. Capt. Hall, of the Irish Company of Wilmington, in Tew's regi-

ment, had one of his men hung over a pole by the thumbs, but Col. Tew had him taken down. In Tew's regiment there are 200 men sick, and a great many have died already, but in ours there are only two in the hospital. Walter sends his love. When you write, direct Camp Hill, Company F., Fourth Regiment, infantry.

Goodbye.

Your affectionate son,

GEORGE.

RICHMOND, VA., July 22, 1861.

Dear Mother:

We arrived here yesterday, and had to walk about four miles to our camps, with our knapsacks on our backs, and everything necessary to soldiers. Before we left Camp Hill, we got our state uniform, blankets and all the accouterments. We were nearly worn out after having walked four miles to our encampment, the knapsack straps hurt our shoulders, besides the weight. We expect to leave here for Manassas to-day, but I do not think we will, as it is raining.

We are enjoying ourselves finely. I have not had anything to eat since yesterday morning, except some cake and apples. We slept on the ground last night, and I felt sorter chilly this morning, but we will soon get used to that. I must close now. Give my love to all.

Goodbye.

Your affectionate son,

GEORGE.

RICHMOND, VA., July 22, 1861.

My Dear Mother:

As George wrote two or three times since I have, I told him I would write when we got to Richmond. The first thing I knew this morning was that he was writing home, so I told him to leave some room for me and I would write some in his letter.

There is not much to write, as we are about four miles from the center of the city. We don't hear any news, though we heard yesterday that they were fighting at Manassas Gap all day. We heard none of the particulars. Captain rather expects to leave to-day, but I do not think we will. Col. Anderson came along with us. We left half of the regiment at Camp Hill (five companies). My opinion is that we will stay here until the other five companies come, and all of us leave together.

David Carter and little lawyer Marsh are both Captains in our regiment. George got the bundle you sent him yesterday. We are enjoying camp life now to perfection. Heretofore we have had a plank floor, but now we pitch our tents, spread our blankets on the ground and sleep as sound as you please. I never slept better in my life than I did last night. If it stops raining this morning I expect to go up town shopping, and if I have time I want to have myself and George's likeness taken together and send it home, as you may never see either of us again.

I can't tell you anything about Richmond yet, as we have not seen any part of it but one street, that was about four miles long, and led out of town to our camp. We are much obliged for the bed quilts.

They do us a great deal of good. We do not trouble ourselves to carry them, but roll them up in our tents. We got blankets before we left our camps. Some of them were the finest I ever saw. I was detailed to give the blankets and knapsacks out, so I kept the best out for all the boys in our tent. They are so fine and nice I hate to spread them on the ground.

Fitzgerald, Henry Warren, Billy Barnes, Tom Stith, George and myself compose the inhabitants of our tent. We have a very respectable crowd. I like it much better than being in a room with the whole company. As we are we have just as nice and quiet a time of it as if we were in a private room.

Give my love to sisters, and believe me, as ever, your sincere and affectionate son,

WALTER.

P. S. I don't know where to tell you to direct your letters in future, as it is uncertain how long we stay here.

COMPANY F., FOURTH REGIMENT, N. C. STATE
TROOPS.

NEAR MANASSAS JUNCTION, VA., July 31, 1861.

Dear Mother:

This is the first opportunity I have had of writing to you since I've been here. We do not live as well here as we have, but we make out very well. We have to walk about a mile for our water; as the ground is too rocky to dig a well we get it out of a spring. You can't imagine how much I wish to see you all, I long to be free to go where I please. But alas, there is no telling where I may be, for when we first came here

we did not expect to stay here this long without having a fight. I went over to the battle field last Sunday, and there met a most horrible sight, for it had been over a week after the fight, and the bodies of the men had been blackened by the burning sun and the horses had a most disagreeable smell.

On our going on the field the first object that met our gaze was a grave in which fifteen North Carolinians were buried. We next came to a Yankee who had only a little dust thrown over him. One of his hands was out, which looked very black, the skin peeling off, and you could see the incision in it. The next which I noticed particularly had his face out and his white teeth looked horrible. The worms were eating the skin off his face. It made me shudder to think that perhaps I may be buried that way.

There are wounded prisoners all through the country in every house. I hope that peace will soon be declared, that we may enjoy the happiness with which we were once blest. I wish you all would write to me for I long to hear from you.

I suppose you heard about Frank T. running from the enemy; it is true, the officers told it. The General gave him his choice to have a Court Martial or be discharged through cowardice, and he took the latter.

We have our little bantams with us yet, and we intend that they shall crow in Washington City, which is only thirty-three miles off, if we live. I must close.

Goodbye,

Your affectionate son,

GEORGE.

MANASSAS JUNCTION, August 23, 1861.

My Dear Mother:

We received your letter this morning when John Clark came. George wrote a day or two ago, which you had hardly received when you last wrote. There is no news of any kind worth writing. George and myself are both well at present. It has been raining here for nearly a week, and it is tolerably cool. This morning was very cool and chilly. It begins to feel like winter is fast approaching. You spoke of sending us some winter clothing. We would be very glad to have a good supply, as we shall suffer if not well clothed in this cold country. I can almost imagine now how cold it will be on top of these high hills when the winter winds come whistling around them. The following list of clothes will be as many as we shall need and can take care of conveniently. Two pairs of thick woolen shirts each, such as can be worn either next to the skin or over other shirts; two pairs of red flannel drawers each, and some woolen socks, that is everything that we shall need for the present. You can send them by express, and we shall get them. You need not attempt to come to see us, for it will be impossible for you to get here. Men are not even allowed to come after their sons to carry them home when they die with sickness in the service. I tell you this to save you the trouble and expense of coming so far and then having to go back without seeing us. It is a great deal harder to get back after you get here than it is to come.

Ed Harris is now here with us, he came day before

yesterday. He will leave in the morning, and I shall send this letter by him. He got here through the influence of some members of Congress of his acquaintance in Richmond.

Give my love to all. Tell them to write often and let us hear all the news.

Good bye.

Your devoted son,

WALTER.

P. S. Please name my dog Nero and try to make him of some account. What is sister's address?

Dear Mother:

As Walter has told you everything, I shall be at a loss what to say, but I cannot help writing when an opportunity presents itself. Our fare is bread and butter and occasionally a little honey. The two latter articles we buy. The nights have been rather cool of late, but we have not suffered any yet.

I wish some of you would write every day, for I do love to hear from home so much. I do not know what else to say, I only thought I would write to let you know that I was still in the land of the living. Write soon, some of you. Tell Dr. Harrell that I shall endeavor to write to him soon. If you have an opportunity, I wish you would send some paper and envelopes, as every letter we send costs about ten cents, and that is too exorbitant a price. Give my love to all. Goodbye.

Your loving son,

GEORGE.

MANASSAS JUNCTION, October 11, 1861.

Dear Mother:

I would have written as soon as I received your letter if the box had come with it, but as the captain could not bring them with him, he had to get them transported on freight, which did not arrive until yesterday. You never saw such a mess in your life, cakes molded, meat spoiled, etc. Everything was safe and sound in our box, which we rejoiced at very much, for we have not been faring the best for the last week or two. Tom Stith got a box which was full of cake and nearly every bit of it was spoiled.

I am thankful for the boots, which are a trifle too large but I reckon by the time that I put on two or three pairs of stockings, they will nearly fit me. We were all very glad to see the captain and we were also pleased to see the things he brought with him, which added so much to our comfort. Times are all very quiet about here. We hear firing on the Potomac nearly every day, though I heard some of the boys say that Mr. Christman was collecting goods to bring to the soldiers. If such be the case I wish you would send me an old quilt or something as somebody has stolen my shawl and I think I shall need one this winter, but you need not send anything unless some one can bring it, for it will cost too much to get anything here. We are all well and if we had been sick our boxes would have cured us. Concerning what Jeff Davis says, I don't think I shall take any notice of it at all, for there are already too many healthy young men skulking around home and I could not bear

the disgrace of leaving the army because I was not eighteen years old, but shall stay in the service until the war is over. I must close now, give my love to all and tell them to write.

Goodbye.

Your loving son,

GEORGE.

MANASSAS JUNCTION, VA., October 24, 1861.

Dear Mother:

I received your letter this morning and was very glad to hear from you all, but was very sorry to hear that sister was sick. There were 544 prisoners brought in here yesterday morning from Leesburg, an account of which you have seen in the paper ere now. They were sent off last night to Richmond. Blake and Jack Robinson was detailed from our company to go as guard. Leesburg has since been taken by the enemy. Our forces retreated seven miles. The enemy are about to flank us and I think that we shall have to fight soon for I guess it is very galling to them to have so many of their men taken prisoners. We have had frost for several nights and it is already beginning to turn very cold, but we have not suffered any yet. I wear two pair of socks in my boots and they do very well, for it keeps the cold wind off my legs.

You were speaking of your hogs being fat. You ought to see these up here, they are so fat that they can hardly get along. The beeves that we have here are the fattest and prettiest I ever saw. They are generally large young cows, nearly twice as large as ours at home. I have often wished that you could

have such at home. We have got thick overcoats from the government, with capes reaching below our elbows. They are of great service to us in standing guard. If we had a good dog and was allowed to shoot, we could live on rabbits, for I never saw so many in my life, the woods are full of them. If I only had Leo here now, I could get along very well. I don't want him to be an unruly dog, for he comes of such good breed that I would not like to hear of his being killed.

I should like to be at home in hog killing time, and wish I could see Tasso now, for I know he is a fine looking dog. I hope Walter's puppy will not turn out I should like to be at home with you on Christmas, but the way affairs are going on now I do not think there is any likelihood of it, as for winter quarters, I do not expect that we will go into any at all, for the enemy pride themselves on standing the cold weather and I expect they will attack us in the dead of winter. We learned from the prisoners that the enemy intended to attack us in two or three days, but let them come when they will. I will insure them a very warm reception. Before this reaches you will have heard of L. Barnes' death and also of Bowden's discharge from the army on account of being a minor, etc. Lafayette's death has cast a deep gloom over the company, for he was a very much beloved member. I will be very glad to get those blankets but I would wait and send them by some one, as they might get lost by themselves. All send their love to you.

Give my love to all. Goodbye.

Your loving son,

GEORGE.

CAMP PICKINS, MANASSAS, VA., Nov. 2, 1861.

MR. CHAS. W. LEE.

Dear Sir:

Yours of the 29th ult. was received to-day, contents duly noted, and I hasten to reply. I must confess to a feeling of surprise that you desire the discharge of your son, Mr. G. B. Lee, from service, as I was of the opinion that you had fully and determinedly given your consent to his serving in the army of the C. S. during the war. Yet, however much I should regret to see George leave us, as he has been with us so long and has been, though young, a strong, athletic and good soldier, you have my free consent to have him discharged. You will be the proper person to apply to the Government through the War Dept., for the same, where I doubt not, should you still desire him to leave, you can, by presenting the facts, after a while obtain his discharge. It is not in my power to do more than give my consent, which you now have. George expressed some surprise on receiving your letter, and says he don't want to leave. I, of course, do not deem it proper to give him any advice, but simply told him to write you whatever he might think proper, as of course you were the person to advise him, when you could. He has just handed me a letter to enclose to you with this. Whatever course you may pursue I shall willingly acquiesce in. If he is still left in my charge, I shall, as heretofore, advise and correct him and use every effort in my power to secure his happiness and welfare. Hoping to hear from you again and that my answer may be satisfactory, I remain,

Yours most respectfully,

J. S. BARNES.

MANASSAS JUNCTION, VA., November 2, 1861.

Dear Father:

I received your letter this morning through Captain Barnes and I never was more surprised in my life, to hear that you had applied for my dismissal for, although I should like very much to go home, I do not like the idea of being discharged from the army on account of my age, for in size and strength I consider myself able to stand the campaign, and should I go home, I do not think that it would be entirely right for me to stay there when our coast is in such imminent peril. I compare this war to that of the revolutionary, when our ancestors fought for their liberty, that whoever remained neutral were considered Tories, and I think that when this war is over and peace is declared, those who had no hand in it will be considered in the same light as the Tories of old, and I have too much pride in me to allow others to gain the rights which I will possess, besides it would take two or three months before a discharge could be obtained. It took Mr. Bowden that long to get his son discharged. Captain Barnes is going to write and he will tell you all about it.

I am very well satisfied here. I am treated well, and am permitted every indulgence which the army regulations will permit. All the boys wish me to stay. I am a minor in age, as you say, but I am a man in size and everything else, and fully able to be a soldier. Nothing would afford me greater pleasure than to be of service to you, but the confederacy also needs my services. But if you

still insist upon my coming home, you can write again. I expect Bowden pictured to you the darkest side of a soldier's life, but there is enough enjoyment blended with it to make a soldier's life very pleasant.

I must close now, so goodbye,

Your loving son,

GEORGE.

MANASSAS JUNCTION, VA., December 9, 1861.

Dear Mother:

I received your letter some days since and was very glad to hear from you and would have answered immediately but Walter has gone to Richmond and I thought I would wait until he came back. He went with a detail of men to carry prisoners who were taken by the N. C. Cavalry. He came back day before yesterday and brought us several books to read. Among the prisoners was a deserter from the Federal camp. He was a Baron in Russia and being of an adventurous disposition, he came over to participate in a battle or two and accepted a Lieutenant's commission in the Federal army, but finding, as he said, that there was not a gentleman in the whole army, he deserted, took a horse and came into our camp and has been sent to Richmond for trial. Formerly he had a commission in the Russian army, which he showed to the people.

We are expecting a battle daily. Yesterday we were presented with a battle flag from General Beauregard, consisting of white cloth crossed with blue. This is for us to fight under and also every other regiment has one. The enemy knows our national flag and had

already tried to deceive us by hoisting it at their head. Now I guess we will deceive them next time.

Our company has been detached from the regiment for the purpose of taking charge of two batteries which another company has left. We are now relieved of a great deal of duty, for we only have to guard the batteries which take six men a day and that brings us on about once a week, and we drill occasionally. With that exception we have nothing to do, but if the regiment leaves to go into a fight our company goes also, and if the battle rages at this point we will give them a few grapes to eat and also a few shells to hide themselves in and then we will play ball with them for a while.

Walter is still at his old, or rather, new post, and has a great deal to do as the chief clerk is very sick. I hope we shall get a chance to come and see you before the winter is gone, but I have given up the idea of seeing you this Christmas, altogether, but after the fight I reckon we can get a chance to go home. Give my love to all and tell them to write soon.

Goodbye. I remain as ever,

Your loving son,

GEORGE.

MANASSAS JUNCTION, VA., January 16, 1862.

Dear Sister:

I received your letter some days since and was very much rejoiced to hear from you, but I thought that you were a very long time in answering my last. It came at last and eagerly did I devour the contents and

with what pleasure I lingered on every sentence, no tongue can tell. The description you gave of your tableaux interested me very much, and I regret very much, not being able to have been there, as all such scenes always interest me so much, besides the desire of seeing you act. I think, myself, that you should have had your face painted, and that would have set off the piece a great deal. It is a pretty hard piece. Didn't you feel pretty scared? What does Dick act? Who was that sweetheart of yours that has been home four times? I should like to know him.

We have a hard time of it here now. The ground is covered with snow and then a sleet over that, and it is nearly as cold as the frozen regions, the winds come directly from mountains and blow around us like a regular hurricane. But we have now moved into our winter quarters, huge log hut, and we keep very comfortable, but it is nothing like home, home with its sweet recollections. As I sit and write I cannot refrain from gliding back into the past and enjoying the blessed memories of yore. But enough of indulging the imagination, for this is a sad reality and it will not do for my imagination to assume too large a sway. Tell Miss Myra that when I visit Washington I will call on her parents. I expect to go there soon, either as a visitor or captive, but I hope as the former. We will have a tableau before long, I expect, but I expect the scene will be played in a larger place than a hall. It will encompass several miles and will take several hours to perform it, but when it does come

off it will end in a sad havoc. I am very thankful to you for those socks you knit for me, and when I wear them I shall think of you. All around me are asleep and the huge logs have sunk into large livid coals ever and anon emitting large brilliant sparks, that cast a ghastly hue around the whole room, and I now think it time to close, so goodbye.

Your loving brother,

GEORGE.

MANASSAS JUNCTION, February 22, 1862.

Dear Mother:

I did not intend to write before the Captain came back, but as one of our men is going home on a sick furlough I thought I would write a few lines to let you know how we are. I expect the Captain is at Richmond at the Inauguration of the President (Jeff Davis), if so he will be here by tomorrow night, and we are all anxiously waiting for his return, each one looking for a letter and a box of good things.

The weather is still very bad and there is an incessant rain since morning, the roads are so sloppy and rough that the wagons can hardly get along over them and very frequently we have our wood to carry on our shoulders to keep our fires burning, but nevertheless we are getting along nicely and not much incommoded from the inclemency of the weather.

To-day you will remember is my birthday, seventeen years old. In size I have been a man for some time, and now I am nearly one in age. I do not feel as boyish as I did when I left home, for here we have

to act the man whether we are or not, and it has been quite natural for me to do so. In the service is a splendid place to study human nature, you can very early find out what a man is. This war will be a benefit to me and an injury to others. Some seem to lose all pride for self, and like a brute are governed entirely by their animal passions. Such persons may be found kneeling at the shrine of Bacchus, to such persons it is decidedly injurious. As for myself, I think it will be very beneficial, for I learn to take care of myself, think and act for myself. I now see how much education is needed, and I regret exceedingly not having applied myself more closely when I had the opportunity. If this war closes within the next year I intend to go to school again, and at the shrine of Minerva seek that which I have never obtained.

One Company of the North Carolina Cavalry were taken prisoners the other day. I do not know which company. Was never in better health. Give love to all.

Your loving son,

GEORGE.

You must excuse such a disconnected letter for my mind is very much confused. Love to all, Miss Mollie and everybody.

MANASSAS JUNCTION, VA., March 5, 1862.

Dear Mother:

As I have nothing to do to-day, I thought I would let you all know how we are getting along. The weather is still very bad, ground muddy and miry

as it can be. We all have had orders to have our heavy baggage ready to send off at a moment's notice, and also to be ready for the field. The enemy is continually marching upon us, and I expect that we will be in a fight soon, but the enemy cannot do so much damage for they cannot bring their artillery along with them. I was vaccinated last week and my arm is now very sore. I am excused from duty on account of it. I wish you would please get a pair of bootlegs and have them footed for me, a thick double soled pair, that will stand anything, and well put up so that there will be no ripping, and send them by Pat Simms. Ask him to take them along with him or Virgil, and also send what they cost, for I don't reckon that you have the ready cash, and will send the money. Let the boots be No. 8, made so that they will fit him, for I guess our feet are pretty near the same size. If you cannot get a pair made, get a pair out of the store, for I am just almost out and there is none about here.

Tell my sisters I think they could answer my letters. I must close now. Give my love to all.

Your loving son,

GEORGE.

Don't get the boots if they cost exceeding \$10.00.

March 14, 1862.

Dear Mother:

We are all well as can be expected from the situation that we are now in. We have retreated from Manassas on account of not being able to hold our position. We are now 25 miles from Manassas, across

the Rappahannock, and camped upon a high hill that commands a splendid view of that part of the river, which the enemy is compelled to cross.

We left Manassas on Sunday night and traveled until about 1 o'clock. When we camped for the night, everything that we could not carry on our backs was burned up, and I can tell you that you cannot imagine how much we suffered on the march, which consisted of three days' traveling, loaded down with our baggage and equipment, sleeping on the hard, cold ground, feet sore, half fed on hard dry crackers and meat. Our lot was not to be envied, and it is amazing how we bore up under the circumstances. We have been at this place for a day or two, for what purpose I know not, unless it be for us to recruit up for another march. We have no tents here to sleep in, but we have made ourselves shelters out of cedar bushes. We all seem to flourish, nevertheless.

The night we left Manassas it was burnt down and I expect there was a million of goods consumed on that night, all the soldiers' clothes they could not carry with them and everything that could have been expected to be at such a place where everything was sent to this division of the army, all was burnt.

I do not know where to tell you to send your letters, for I do not know how long we will stay here, so I reckon you had better not write at all. When I get to a place where it is likely we will stay, I will write again at a better opportunity.

Give my love to all. Goodbye.

Your loving son,

GEORGE.

HDQTS. SPECIAL BRIGADE, NEAR RAPIDAN
STATION, VA., March 23rd, 1862.

My Dear Mother:

We received your letter last night dated the 6th of March. 'Tis the first time any of us have heard from home within the last two weeks. We have had considerable excitement since you last heard from us. To-day, two weeks ago, we evacuated Manassas and have been moving to the rear ever since. We are now on the South side of the Rapidan River, where I think we will make a stand. But nothing is known for certain, I don't believe the Generals themselves know. The night we left Manassas (about sunset) we marched ten miles that night, stopped about two o'clock and slept on the ground with the sky for a covering. We haven't had a tent in two weeks. We are playing the soldier now in good earnest. The last three days we marched it rained every night just as soon as we would stop for the night. After walking all day, carrying your ALL on your back, then having to start a fire out doors without wood (we have no light wood) and cook your next day's ration, is pretty hard soldiering, I can assure you. Though the boys all seem to be cheerful. We have very little sickness and for the last ten days (a circumstance not known before since we have been in Virginia) we haven't had a man to die in the Regiment. Pat Simms and his recruits have not yet arrived, they were stopped at Gordonsville some time ago, while we were making our retreat from Manassas. We expect them daily.

The Yankees have been some distance this side of

Manassas. Our troupes had a little skirmish with them a day or two after we left, some of the Cavalry came in sight of our pickets. They fired on them and they disappeared, 'tis reported that they have gone back to Centerville, perfectly non-plussed at our movement. The country we are now occupying is the prettiest and the most beautiful scenery you ever saw. We can see the mountains in the distance covered with snow, and when the sun shines it is sublime. We are on what is called the "Clark Mountain." There is a mountain or rather hill, on a mountain, about a quarter of a mile off that commands a view of the country for miles around, some of the men are up there all the time. I intend to send this letter to Richmond to be mailed. I do not know that there is any communication between here and Richmond. We only got the old mail that was stopped at Gordonville. MacWilliams, one of our company, is going to Richmond tomorrow on business. I will get him to mail it for me.

I do not see a word about this move in the papers, so I must think the Government is withholding it from them, to prevent the Yankees from obtaining information. Johnnie Dunham is still A. A. Genl. of the Brigade and I am writing for him, though I do not have one third to do that I did at Manassas, as that was a regular military post. We had inspection to-day, to see how the guns, etc., were getting on after the hard usage and bad weather they have gone through lately.

Write soon. We may get all of your letters, though you might not get all of ours, unless mailed beyond

Gordonsville. Give my love to all the family, Aunt and Claudia, etc, etc. I remain,

Your sincere and devoted son,

WALTER.

March 23rd, 1862.

Dear Mother:

As Walter did not mention me in his letter, I thought I would let you know that I am well. Walter has told you nearly everything that transpired on our tramp, so I have not anything to tell except the burning of the property at Manassas the same day that we left. We had been told to go to the Junction and get what things out of our boxes as we could carry on our backs, for the boxes would not be carried on the train. After we left, the town was set on fire, and I expect that a million dollars' worth of property was consumed. We had to leave our little Bantam chickens, as we had no way to carry them. The first night of our march, I never suffered so much from fatigue in my life. When we did halt we fell on the ground and slept soundly until next morning. I do not expect you can hardly read this, as it is done by a log fire on my cartridge box. Must close. Good bye.

Your loving son,

GEORGE.

YORKTOWN, VA., April 13, 1862.

Dear Mother:

I commenced a letter to you the other day but was unable to finish it, being called off to participate in a

slight skirmish with the Yankees. We arrived at this place last Thursday evening and having sent out our portion of the picket, of which I was one, we ate our hard bread and meat and laid on the hard, cold ground for the night, with the blankets we brought on our backs for a covering. On Friday we were ordered out, for the Yankees were about to attack us, our skirmishers went out towards the enemy for the purpose of drawing them within range of our batteries, the enemy came in sight with a long line of artillery and drew up in battle array about half a mile from our batteries, by that time there was some right hard fighting on the part of the skirmishers. About two o'clock p. m., our batteries opened upon them and they were returned with the greatest alacrity; bombs, shells and balls flew about promiscuously, but happily they did no damage on our side, nearly all of them going over our heads. We threw some shells that seemed to do damage with the Yankees, the way they scattered when the shell fell among them. One shell which came over us bursted and fell all around, one piece fell right between two of our boys, but no injury done. The firing continued until dark, in the time the skirmishers set fire to a large dwelling house, near the enemy's infantry and under the cover of the smoke they broke in on them and routed them, but they had soon to retreat for the Yanks turned their batteries upon them, after which hostilities ceased for the night. We lay in the entrenchments all night. Next morning, Saturday, the enemy was not to be seen. This morning we are expecting an attack again, and have been or-

dered into the entrenchments, but they have not made an attack yet.

Gen. Magruder says that if they do not attack us to-day, that he will them to-morrow. We are exactly on the battle ground of Washington and Cornwallis, but all that remains to be seen are the old breastworks of the British, which lie immediately behind ours. The Yankees hold the same position that Washington did. There is also the place where Cornwallis surrendered his sword to Washington. Yorktown is the oldest place I ever saw. I do not believe that there is a single house that has been built in fifty years. As I was walking through the town, I chanced to come upon an old grave yard, that had gone into entire ruin. There could be seen the tombstone of the Revolutionary soldier, citizen and foreigner. The oldest one was dated 1727, that was the tombstone of an old lady sixty years old, and another of a president of his majesty's council in Virginia. He died in 1753, and all the rest of nearly the same date. It was a perfect pleasure to me to look over the old place, such a contrast to the clay hills of Manassas. I feel nearer home, but still I am a long ways off. I am wanted now, as they are continually detailing men for something or other. I will send the letter I wrote the other day. When the battle closes I will write again.

Give my love to all.

Your loving son,

GEORGE.

P. S. I have not heard from Walter yet, except from a man that came from the hospital, he says that his hand is nearly well.

RICHMOND, VA., June 15, 1862.

Dear Mother:

I hope you are not uneasy about me because I have not written before. I knew if I wrote it would take a week for you to get it, so I put it off till I could send it by Mr. Albert Farmer, who will go tomorrow. The Surgeon of the hospital has given me a passport to stay wherever I please in the city and report to him every week. I believe I should go crazy if I had to stay out in the hospital where everything is so dull and disheartening. In fact I don't believe I am the same being I was two weeks ago, at least I don't think as I used to and things don't seem as they did. I don't believe I will ever get over the death of George. The more I think of him the more it affects me, and unless I am in some battle and excitement I am eternally thinking of the last moments of his life. How he must have suffered, if he was conscious of it. I shall never forget it. I think a long letter from some of you would make me feel so much better. I shall send by Mr. Farmer my watch, sleeve buttons, also the shirt I wore off. Everything I ought to have left at home I brought away and a great many things I ought to have brought I left behind. I only brought one flannel shirt, and by the way I'll send this one back and try this summer without them, as they are very heavy for summer wear. The war news you read every day in the papers, but Capt. Billy Brown came down from Gordonville with some of Jackson's prisoners. He says he was in Lynchburg. Twenty-two hundred were sent in and that thirteen hundred were on the way.

The Yankees that are near Richmond, we don't hear anything of, everything is quiet. Please some of you write me soon.

Your loving son,

WALTER.

HEAD QUARTERS, ANDERSON BRIGADE,
RIPLEY DIVISION, August 11, 1862.

My Dear Mother:

I am sorry I have kept you waiting so long before writing to you, but I thought I would wait until I could have a talk with General Anderson to find out what I was to do before writing. I sent word by John Hines, also Dr. Barham, that I was well and for them to tell you all the news. When I arrived at the Camp of our Regiment it was gone to Malvern Hill to have a fight with the Yankees. They did not return in a day or two. General Anderson went to Richmond immediately on business, so I did not have an opportunity of speaking with him until this morning. He was perfectly willing for me to come back into the office, so I commenced duty this morning. We have a very pleasant place for our quarters, a large two story house with plenty of shade, in an open field, where we have the breezes from every direction.

I don't know yet, but I may come up here to mess and sleep, though I thought I would wait a while. I haven't slept in a tent since I've been in camp, but once. That was last night. It rained yesterday morning, and the ground was wet, and the air rather cold, so I thought I would go in the tent, as it was con-

venient. I shall go in bathing tonight to cool off, and sleep out doors. We have an excellent place for that purpose, that is bathing. It's been awfully hot here today. I believe it is warmer here than at home.

General G. W. Smith was to-day assigned to the command of our Division. I understand he is an excellent officer. Some of our regiments in this brigade have received their conscripts. They are a very good looking set of men seen drilling in a field, as they were this morning. It looks right funny to see men so green, but I suppose all of us were so at first, and we ought not to make fun of them. Dossey's Regiment is only about half mile from here. He has been to see me twice since I have been here. I went over to see him last Saturday. He was very well. I went up to see Dunham when I passed through Richmond, but he had gone home the week before, so I was disappointed. Give my best respects to all friends, and my love to all the family, some of you write often and tell me everything that happens about town.

Goodbye, as ever,

Your loving son,

WALTER.

P. S. I've got to endorse this letter for the want of stamps. I haven't written any in so long a time that my hand is as stiff as if I had been mauling rails, you can readily see the difference now and some time ago. I hope it will soon get better.

I forgot to tell you that our whole brigade was throwing up breastworks every day, about two miles from here, that is the only duty they do now, no guard duty.

HEAD QUARTERS, ANDERSON BRIGADE,

August 15, 1862.

My Dear Mother:

As Mr. Parker will leave in the morning for home, I thought I would avail myself of the opportunity to let you hear from me. There is nothing new to write in the way of "War News." You hear everything that we do, and that's in the papers. Everything on our lines is quiet. We were put under marching orders a day or two ago, with the expectation of making another march to "Malvern Hill," but the Yankees left and it saved us the trouble of running them away. Eight hundred of the Brigade are still working on the breastworks, some two miles below here. I am in hopes the Yankees will never get near enough to Richmond for us to have to fight behind them. The other regiment in the Brigade has received their conscripts, ours is the smallest one and we haven't received a single one, and I hope we won't.

General Anderson was making a calculation this morning and he says that we have lost 226 men, killed and died from their wounds, since the day before we went into the fight at "Seven Pines." The Regiment is now under command of Pat Simms. All of our company are in very good health. I don't believe that we have a single man on the sick list, and I believe it is owing in a great degree to the good water we get. It is the best we have had since we've been in Virginia. I am getting along very well indeed, enjoying excellent health, and have a very pleasant time.

We have very little writing to do, not half as much

as we had at Manassas. General Anderson has no Adj. General yet. I would not be surprised if he was not waiting for Dunham to get well. I believe he likes Dunham better as an officer than any man in the Brigade. He has one of his brothers (Walker) as one of his Aides. I wish you would please look in my trunk and send me that brown veil that you will find. I want it to put over my face when I take a nap in the morning, to keep off the flies. You never saw any flies yet, you can measure them by the bushel here. The mosquitoes are terrible here, too. I shall put it over my face when I sleep out of doors, and that's every night that it don't rain. I've just learned from Mr. Parker that little Leon was dead. Poor little fellow, I never thought that when I left home it would be the last time I should see him.

Give my love to all the family, my respects to all my friends. Write soon, tell me all the news.

Your affectionate son,

WALTER.

P. S. Please send the veil by the first one coming to our camp. Give my respects to all the boys that you see.

HEAD QUARTERS, ANDERSON BRIGADE,
30 MILES FROM RICHMOND ON MANAPAS
RAILROAD, August 23rd, 1862.

My Dear Mother:

This is the first opportunity that I have had to write to you since we left our camp near Richmond. Mr. Christman left us, or rather parted from us, in

Richmond as we passed through on our march. Blake and myself did not get the barrel that was sent by Mr. Christman, though we had just as much fruit and Irish potatoes (that the company received) as we could eat. We left the very next morning after the night Mr. Christman arrived. The first day we marched about 14 miles and camped in an open field, the next day we march all day until dark. We stopped, ate our supper, spread our blankets and was just going to sleep, nearly every man exhausted, when the drum sounded and the order given for every man to be under arms. In ten minutes the brigade marched off and we continued the march until nearly day. The next morning, that is those that kept up, (the road for ten miles was strewn with men who had fallen out of ranks from exhaustion). We are now encamped at the place we arrived at that night. We have been here three days and it is impossible to tell when we will leave. This is a very important position for the Aides of General Jackson. The Yankees are about twelve miles from us and it was supposed that they would make an attack at this point, is the reason we were in such a hurry to get here that night. We would have made a very poor stand if they had. I don't suppose we had more than one third of the men when we arrived here that night, when we came through Richmond. I had a very good opportunity of judging as our company was detailed that day as a war guard of the Brigade, to prevent straggling, and I marched behind with them for company. It's no use trying to make a broken down man get up and march. We

didn't know but what the Yankees were near or advancing on us, but the men would lie right down side of the road and swear they could not go one foot farther, Yankees or no Yankees. They are still coming in though it has been three days ago.

You may say what you please about marching twenty or thirty miles a day in warm weather, but I don't believe in it. The last day we marched twenty-six miles, we started at daylight and didn't stop until nearly day break the next morning, with about one third of the men, when we got to the end of our route, we had when we started and they were good for nothing, with their feet all blistered and sore. Mine have just got so I can walk without limping. You may direct your next letter to Richmond as heretofore, putting on the back "Smith's Division," and I reckon it will be forwarded. We have a very pleasant place to camp. I wouldn't care if we were to stay here for a month. General Anderson and his Staff are in tents at present, no house being near. Col. Grimes arrived this morning. The men are all very glad to see him return. They all love him since the fights that he has led them in. Give my love to all the family. Tell sister to write. I have written, I believe, three letters home and haven't received but one.

Your affectionate son,

WALTER.

HEAD QUARTERS, ANDERSON'S BRIGADE,
SOUTH SIDE OF POTOMAC, OPPOSITE
BERLIN, LOUDON Co., Sept. 5, 1862.

My Dear Mother:

I guess you are all very anxious about me, that is to know my whereabouts. Since I last wrote you I have been through the most hardships that I ever have before. Today makes eleven successive days that we have been on the march, without resting a day since we left Anderson's station, the place from which I last wrote you. We are now on the side south of the Potomac, opposite a place called Berlin, where there is some 'Yankees, don't know how many. We have our brigade and a tolerable good force of Artillery at this point. What we intend to do or where we are going, it's impossible to say. The men are all very anxious to drop over into Maryland and I don't know but what that will be our next move. We have just stopped for the night, after a march of about twenty miles. I'm in a hurry to finish before dark, as we have no candles or lightwood. Mr. Ed Marsh will leave for North Carolina in the morning, he will carry our mail. We haven't had a chance to send off our mail before, since we waded the Rapidan River. Day before yesterday we marched over the battle ground that Jackson had his last fight on. All of our men had been buried, but the Yankees lay just as they were killed. I never saw such a scene before. I saw just from the road, as I did not go out of my way to see any more. It must have been nearly a thousand. Our wagon actually ran over the dead bodies in the

road before they would throw them out, or go around them. The trees were literally shot all to pieces. The wounded Yankees were all over the woods, in squads of a dozen or more, under some shady tree without any quard of any kind to guard them. I recollect one squad on the side of the road with their bush shelter in ten steps of a dead Yankee, that had not been buried and was horribly mangled. I don't suppose the dead Yankees of that fight will ever be buried. It will be an awful job to those who do it, if it is ever done. There is some five or six of our company that have not come up yet. Blake is among the number. They are not sick, merely broken down. The Second N. C. Regiment haven't more than half of the men with them now, that they had when they left Richmond. It has been an awfully hard march. Two men died in one day from sun stroke. The weather is not so warm now as some days ago. It takes two or three blankets to keep us warm at night, it is so cool. The days are very warm. I hope to gracious that we will stay here tomorrow and rest a while, it's a beautiful place on the side of the Blue Ridge. The sun will not strike the ground where our headquarters are during the whole day. I don't know where to tell you to direct your next letter. Richmond, though, I reckon. Give my love to all the family. Goodbye. I'll now cook my supper. I'll have an excellent one tonight, chicken, and sugar and coffee and biscuit.

Yours, etc.,

WALTER.

I bought sugar at $12\frac{1}{2}$ c per pound and coffee at 25c pound this morning in a store on our way.

HEAD QUARTER'S ANDERSON'S BRIGADE,
MAR. BUNKER'S HILL, VA.,

Sept. 29, 1862.

My Dear Mother:

It has been some time since I last wrote you. I hope you have not been uneasy about me, for I have never been in better health in my life. During the past two months we have been on the march almost constantly, sometimes resting one or two days, but never longer.

On Sunday, the 14th of September, we left our camp at 4 o'clock in the morning and marched some six miles to the top of the Blue Ridge and drew up in line of battle. We were not long waiting for the Yankees, they came in very large columns and we fought until after dark. That night our troops fell back through Boonsboro some few miles and drew up in line of battle little after sunrise, very little fighting was done on that day, only some cannonading. We continued in our position until the 17th inst., when we had almost a general engagement. The line of battle of our Brigade was some two hundred yards in front of a house in which General D. H. Hill and General Anderson had their Head Quarters. The fight commenced in the morning before I awoke (long before sunrise), soon after light the wounded from the Artillery commenced coming in, pretty soon the wounded infantry came in by the dozens. There wasn't a surgeon on the battle field from our Brigade, but Gus Stith. He stayed there to the last. He, his two assistants and myself dressed the wounds until

the Yankees got in 30 yards of the house. General Anderson was anxious to get off before the Yankees got nearer. He did not want to be taken prisoner by them. He would prefer being shot through the head, so Capt. Gales, his A. A. General, myself and two other men of the Ambulance Corps carried him through a field that looked like it was impossible for man to walk ten steps without being killed, though we got out safe. A piece of shell struck me on the knee, which occasioned some little inconvenience for a few days, but nothing else. The house in which we were was the hottest part of the battle field, we were exposed to a cross fire of two Yankee Batteries and from the front by musket balls. The house, kitchen, trees and everything else was torn and shot all to pieces. We had a large pot full of chicken on the stove, cooking for dinner, when a bomb took off one-half of the kitchen and turned the stove bottom upwards. That stopped the splendid dinner we had in preparation. You must get Gus Stith to tell you all about our campaign, adventures, etc. He can do it better than I can write it. Every day's march through Maryland I could write a long letter, but when it is all past and forgotten I can't think of one thing that I wished to write. If I ever live to get home I can think of one thing at a time, and tell you a great many little incidents of interest. The Northern part of Virginia and some parts of Maryland is the most beautiful country that I ever saw. I don't know how it is in the winter, but from the looks of the soil, it's as muddy as Manassas, I reckon. We (our company) lost several in

the two battles, none killed, but some badly wounded, others taken prisoners or have not come up yet, may be wounded and left on the battlefield and had to be left in the hands of the Yankees when we fell back this side of the Potomac. We are now encamped on the Turnpike from Martinsburg to Winchester, some ten miles from the latter place.

I don't know where to tell you to direct your next letter, Richmond, though, I reckon. Our mail for this Brigade is at Winchester, we will get that to-day. I hope to get some letters from home when it comes. I must close this so as to have it ready when Gus Stith starts, he can't tell when, so I must have it ready. I may get something in the mail before this gets off.

Your loving son,

WALTER

NEAR BUNKER HILL, VA., October 1st, 1862.

Dear Mother:

I have just received a letter from you, dated Sept. 2nd. It is the first word I have heard from home since I left Richmond (I forgot I did receive one letter down at Anderson's station, 30 miles from Richmond). It appears that you have not received the letter I wrote from the Potomac, opposite Berlin, though you must have gotten it before now. I heard that Pat Simms will be in Wilson for a short time as detail for our winter clothing. He can tell you all about that trip. It has been so long that I have forgotton almost all about it. I shall send this by Dr. Stith, as he starts in the morning. You can get him to tell you a good deal

of news if you choose. Dr. Stith and Pat Wooten came up this morning. I haven't been up to see them yet. I must sleep and stay at head quarters nearly all the time, as it is more convenient and I get plenty of something to eat, and often something extra. If Pat Simms goes home, as I think he will, you may send me my two flannel shirts and my drawers, also two pair of woolen socks. I reckon I will have to make out with shoes this winter, though if you can have me a good pair of winter sewed boots made (large 6s) you may send them also, and the price. If I can't wear them myself I can sell them for any price I may choose to ask. See if Pat is willing to bring them first and if he is certain that he can get them here without being lost. Write often by some of the boys that are coming.

Your affectionate son,

WALTER.

HEAD QUARTERS, ANDERSON'S BRIGADE,

November 14, 1862.

My Dear Mother:

As I have another good opportunity of sending a letter the other side of Richmond to be mailed, I thought I would avail myself of it. One of our surgeons will leave in the morning for North Carolina, so that I can have my letter mailed very near home, it will stand less chance of being lost. I have neglected to write to you longer than I wished, waiting for an opportunity of sending it by some one. This is the first chance that has occurred. The letters that are

mailed here for North Carolina, not one half of them ever get there, so I made up my mind not to write except when I knew you would receive it. We have been through a good many hardships since I last wrote to you, tho' we haven't had any fighting, that is, our Brigade has not, tho' we have lain in line of battle several days and nights at the time, waiting for the advance of the enemy. The strongest position I think our Division ever occupied was on the mountains behind rock fences, near Paris. We stayed there one day and night, but the Yankees didn't come. We left there and marched to Fort Royal, there we laid in line of battle two days and one night. Little after dark the second day we got orders to cross the Shenandoah River and take up camp some mile or two off for the night. The men were cold and hungry and somewhat expecting the Yankees that night, when the word was given they started at a double quick for the river, some half mile off, and in they went, half waist deep, the water was freezing cold and the wind almost cutting you in two. I guess you know something about the mountain winds in the winter. For the next few days we had some rest, but we don't lie idle in camp long at a time. Night before last we marched seven miles, tore up and burned railroads all night, and marched back ten miles the next day. To-day is a beautiful sunshiny one, and I hope we will remain quiet for the men's sake. We have had one snow some two or three inches deep, though it melted very soon, there are thousands of barefooted men in Virginia and I do hope we will have pleasant weather until they

can get shoes. We have a good many in our Brigade stark barefooted, and have not had a shoe on since we left Richmond some months ago. John Burton, poor fellow, was paroled and came up with us some week or two back, looking dreadfully. He has gone home on a furlough. He was barefooted and almost clothesless. My feet can just be said to be off the ground and that is all. They are no protection from wet weather. I hope Pat Simms will come soon and have my boots with him. I am glad you sent me a pair of pants, as these are entirely worn out. I have been patching them up for some time. There is two big patches on the knees as large as your two hands, put on with blue cloth, you recollect the pants are brown. I never thought to mention any clothes in my letter. I hope you thought of them. I need a pair. I also need an overcoat, but I will have to wait until the Regiment get their clothes before I can get one. I hope before one month more passes we will be on the railroad somewhere, so I can get something good to eat once more. I think I will know how to appreciate something good after living on beef and bread for so long. I want some oysters and sweet potatoes and other winter delicacies so much. I hope, if we ever do get where I can change my diet, I will be able to stop the diarrhoea which has been reducing me for some time. I've fallen off considerable since we left Richmond. With that exception I have nothing to complain of. In a great many respects I fare a great deal better than the officers of the regiment do. I have better fare and not half the duty to do.

The other night, when all the men were at work on the railroad, I was with our wagon and had as comfortable a night's sleep as I ever do. I very often get a chance to ride on the march, too, for the last several marches I have ridden Col. Grimes' extra horse. Since we left Richmond we have crossed twenty streams waist deep and very often in the night, and I have never waded one yet. I always get a ride across, some way or another.

We will have a general change at Headquarters in a few days. General Ramseur is assigned to this Brigade and I expect he will bring his own Staff with him. I'll stand as good a chance of remaining as any of them and I think I will be very apt to remain, at least I shall try to do so. I hope he will be as clever as the other commanders have been. I like Col. Grimes very much and I think he is more entitled to the promotion of Brigadier than Ramseur, who was only a Captain of Artillery, though they say he is a West Pointer, and a very good officer. I hope he will prove himself to be as good as General Anderson was, though that is hardly possible. I don't think he had his equal in the Confederate Army. I hope Dr. Harrell will pass his examination and get in the army as surgeon. It is the easiest and most comfortable position there is in the Army.

Tell Mr. Rhodes if I was in his place I would try and get in a new company, one that has not been in long. Dr. Bullock's Company would suit him better than any other. He thinks that we've got a good one and a picket company, but it is not what it was, and he

would be out of place all the time if he would try to keep up with men who had been playing the old soldier for nearly two years. I would rather be dead than in the place of some of the Conscripts sent to our Regiment, they look like they wanted to die, they felt so bad. Please let me know in your next whether you ever received my watch or not. I've asked in every letter and you've never told me yet. Write soon to your

Affectionate son,

WALTER.

Give my love to all the family, tell some of them to write. I haven't sent a letter home yet with a stamp on it, it is because we can't possibly get them and I know it makes no difference with you.

HEADQUARTERS FOURTH BRIGADE.

November 27, 1862.

My Dear Mother:

I received your letter yesterday, and also one from brother by Mr. Gorman. I was very glad to hear from you, as I had not received any news from home in some time. He handed me the gloves also, which you sent by him. Nothing ever came in better time in the world. I had been trying my best to get a pair of some kind ever since cold weather set in, but could not, gloves such as you sent me sell for \$3.00 in this country, and everything else in proportion. The last letter that I wrote home, sent to Richmond by Capt. John Grimes to be mailed, was from our Camp near Strasburg, Va. We left there on Friday, the 21st,

and arrived here on Tuesday evening, the 25th, making a march of over one hundred miles in four days. It is the best marching that we have ever done, it's because we are going towards home, I reckon, that the men did so well. There are hundreds of them barefooted and ice on the ground all day. General Hill issued an order yesterday requiring all the barefooted men to make sandals of raw hides with the hair on the inside. It answers the purpose very well. It's a wonder the idea had not been thought of sooner, before the men suffered so much. Gorman says that Pat Simms will be here to-day with the things for the Regiment. I hope he will be, for I need my boots very badly, also my pants. I shall draw a pair of pants from the Regimental clothing, also a pair of shoes. I bought me a Yankee overcoat, a very comfortable one, for \$12.50, a better coat than our men draw at more money. We are now on our way to Hanover Junction, some fifty miles off. We have stopped here to transport our sick on the cars ahead of us, though we have been here going on two days, a longer time than would be required for that purpose. We have no idea how long we will stay here. From what you write about your exchanging farms, I think you made a very good bargain. I wish I could be with you to help you fix it up. The boys are all well as could be expected. Virgil Stevens looks thin from diarrhoea. Tom Stith looks as fat as a pig. Buck Hansill is the same old "Buck," though Marshbourns, that is Sam, is well and tough, Jim I don't recollect having seen for some time. I really don't know whether he is in the

company or not. I did write to you and intended to send it by Ed Gordon, but he left just before I carried my letters up to the Company to give him. The next time any one leaves Wilson for the Company, please send me some kind of tonic bitters. I need something of the kind.

Give my love to all, and believe me as ever,

Your affectionate son,

WALTER.

HEAD QUARTERS FOURTH BRIGADE,
HILL'S DIV., NEAR GUNNEY DEPOT,
12 MILES FROM FREDERICKSBURG,
December 2nd., 1862.

My Dear Mother:

Once more settled in camp for a little while, long enough to write, at least, I thought I would let you know where we are and what we are doing. We are on the railroad between Richmond and Fredericksburg, some twelve miles from the latter place. What we are doing, one hasn't the remotest idea. We can't tell whether we are going to fight here or not, or how long we shall stay here. I think the most of our army is in this vicinity and some part of it is constantly in motion. Ewell's Division is now passing our encampment. I'm in hopes we will stay here until our men get their clothing. Ed Gordon has just returned, though he does not bring any news from home. He says that Pat Simms will start back to-day. He certainly has appointed enough times for starting to have been here long before now, if he is not able to

bring the things, why doesn't he let some one else come with them. The men have been kept out of their clothing long enough. May Warren, I understand, is willing to bring them. If you should receive this before any of them leaves, please send my watch and chain by him, I need the use of it very much and I don't think there is any danger of my losing it or being killed this winter or fall, campaign is about over. If both of them have left, please send it by the first reliable person coming to our company. Please have a key fitted to it and send that also, also a piece of buckskin in my trunk. Wrap them all up together and enjoin the one that brings it to be very careful with it, and not to lose it. I have not time to write much more, as Major Miller, who is going to take my letter to Richmond to be mailed, is in a hurry to go to the depot, for fear of being left. I received the things which you sent by Buck Hansill, also the gloves you sent by John Gorman, all I need now are the things which you are going to send by Pat Simms. Give my love to all the family and believe me, as ever, your

Affectionate son,

WALTER.

P. S. Write often and tell me all the news about home. Wrap my watch up very securely and direct it to me. Don't forget to send me a key for it, as I have none.

WILLIAMSPORT, MD., July 8, 1863.

My Dear Mother:

As I think there will be an opportunity of sending off a letter in a day or two, I believe I will drop you a few lines to let you know of some of my adventures since I last wrote you (Winchester). We have had rain every day since we left Winchester. I've been marching about ten to twenty miles a day. After the first two days our squad of two hundred dwindled down to about fifteen men, most of whom were officers. A Lieutenant from Texas commanded us. We were bound to form squads of some strength to prevent "bushwhackers" and the enraged citizens from attacking us on the road. Last summer was nothing at all to this one in Pennsylvania. Although I did not have the pleasure of going into Yankeeland with them, I was following them in the rear and could see the havoc they did. The squad that I was in, the first night we got into Pennsylvania, killed a hog near a man's house and then sent two men to him to borrow cooking utensils to cook it in, most of them would make the expression, "I reckon you got your rations out of the field."

The Fourth of July we got in eight miles of the battlefield, all that day the citizens tried their best to prevent our going any farther. Told us we were certainly gone chickens if we went any farther, that the Yankees were on picket some little distance off in large force. We didn't put any confidence in their chat but kept on. The last day of the three days' big fight, we got within a few miles of the battlefield, when we met

General Imboden's Cavalry, the advance guard of our whole wagon train, who turned us back by orders from General Lee, ordering us at the same time to keep with the train, which did not stop until we arrived at this place, we (the wagon train) intended to ford the river here and again set foot on Virginia soil, but it has rained so much we have been waiting four days for the river to fall low enough to ford it. The Yankees attacked us here day before yesterday with the intention of capturing us, but they were driven off. I can't form the most distant idea what the army is going to do, whether they intend to stay this side of the river or go back into Virginia. There is not a day passes but you hear of fighting going on. You don't feel right unless you hear cannonading going on. The stillness doesn't seem natural. There are five or six thousand Yankees here waiting for the river to fall to cross.

When I have more time I will write again. Captain Thompson was wounded slightly and has crossed the river, I don't know with what intention. Buck Nolly was killed in our company.

Write to me as soon as you get this and let me hear from you all, direct to Richmond and I will get it. This letter is No. 3.

WALTER.

CAMP NEAR ORANGE C. H., August 2nd, 1863.

My Dear Mother:

I received your letter day before yesterday, just as we received orders to march. We marched about fif-

teen miles yesterday through the hottest sun that I ever felt. The men were constantly dropping out from overheat, and one or two died from the effects. We are in camp to-day, but have orders to hold ourselves in readiness to move at a moment's notice. The report is the Yankees are advancing on Culpepper. I guess we will leave here tonight or before day in the morning. This army is seeing a very hard time at present. Nothing to eat but beef and flour and the hardest marching that this army has ever done. At the time we crossed the mountains at Fort Royal, we marched from 4 o'clock one morning until day break next morning. We were drawn up in line of battle twice during the time, once we had a very sharp fight between our sharpshooters and the Yankees. Our Brigade was in line on an edge of a mountain overlooking the whole scene. I don't think it will be long before we shall have a fight, from our present movements. I thought I told you in the letter I wrote from near Hargerstown, while in line, that I was with the Regiment. You must have missed getting that letter. This makes the fifth I have written since I left home. When I got with the regiment everything had so much changed at headquarters, new men detailed, and my not knowing any of them, I concluded to go back with the company. I have been doing duty with the Company ever since I got back and I believe I feel better satisfied. Jim Gay got back to the regiment this morning, left Wilson last Wednesday. He has told us all about the Yankee raid.

I have been suffering some little from pain in the feet, caused by hard marching. The doctor told me yesterday that I might put my things in the ambulance. At night when I went after them, some one had stolen my knapsack with all my clothes, except what I have on, and my shawl. I'll try and make out with what I have until cold weather comes on. You may send me two pair cotton and two pair woolen socks the first opportunity you have. That will be the first thing that I will need. Dossey came over to see me this morning and read a letter to me that he got from Cousin Claudia yesterday.

There is some little talk sometimes of our Brigade being ordered to North Carolina. I wish to gracious we could be. I'll bet the Yankees wouldn't cut up there like they have been. To-day is Sunday and one of the hottest that I ever felt. We are in a piece of woods where there isn't one breath of air stirring. If we do have to march to-day, half of the men will give out from overheat. I would much rather march two nights than one day. You may send me that home-spun shirt in my trunk, at the same time you do the socks—that checked one. I hope the authorities will send some troops home to prevent the Yankees from making a raid through there. Write whenever there is anything to tell me about home and you all.

Your affectionate son,

WALTER.

CAMP ON RAPIDAN RIVER, SIX MILES
NORTH OF RAPIDAN STATION, Sept. 22, 1863.

My Dear Mother:

I had intended to write you the very day we left Orange Court House, but the movement prevented me. We left there yesterday week, marched towards Rapidan, camped near the river for two days, hearing the cannonading between our forces and the Yankees the whole time, neither crossing in any force. Our cavalry made a dash across the river, taking some thirty prisoners. The Second North Carolina Cavalry are on the other side of the river now and is thought to be cut off. We are now eighteen miles from Orange Court House on the Rapidan river. I can't learn the name of the ford. Our division is in line of battle, about one mile from the river. We have thrown up some breastworks and we have an excellent position. All I hope is that the Yankees may come across, for I feel confident we can whip them worse than they have ever been yet. A deserter who came across says they have only two corps and that they are most conscripts. He says they are deserting by the hundreds. Last evening our division moved in a piece of woods some three hundred yards in rear of our breastworks. I suppose it was done that the men might keep more comfortable. Night before last we had a pretty smart frost and the wind blew like winter. I spent two thirds of the night by the fire to keep warm. My pair of blankets got left in one of the wagons.

If you do not have any use for that map of Vir-

ginia, which you bought last winter, please loan it to me; send it by Thompson. I will take good care of it and return it.

In times like this, one blanket is as much as any man wants hung to him, and nine times out of ten he throws that one away during the fight. As soon as we go into camp again I shall have plenty of bedding. When Dr. Thompson comes back, I wish you would send my overcoat. I think I shall need it by then, also one pair of woolen socks. The flannel drawers you may keep until we go into camp. I have no way of carrying them. I never intend to carry another knapsack on my back, as long as I stay in the service. John Valentine brought the things you sent by him. The shirt fits exactly. You need not trouble about making the other in any hurry. I shall not need it until we go in camp.

Henry Warren came to us yesterday morning. The bag of potatoes which he brought could not have come in a better time. It was a rich treat, I assure you. We have been lying in line of battle two or three days, living on half cooked rations sent from the wagon yard, and to get a bag of sweet potatoes was a perfect Godsend. We just set around the fire and roasted them last night and talked of the good things at home for a late hour. Tom Stith, Tom Atkinson, Peter Christman and myself compose our mess and whatever either gets, he shares it with the rest. Tom Stith has a trunk of things at Orange Court House, that Henry had to leave, as he had to take it afoot to where he found us; his boy

brought my potatoes. Tell sister that I will write to her soon. I should have written this time, but couldn't get the paper. It took me half an hour to borrow this half sheet. You need not look for me home on a furlough for a long time yet; there are men in the camp that haven't been home since we came to Virginia. You know I have been home twice. It will be a long time before my time comes around. The next furlough, I expect, will be a wounded or sick one.

Give my love to all the family and believe me as ever,

Your affectionate son,

WALTER.

CAMP NEAR MORTON'S FORD,

ON RAPIDAN RIVER, October 5th, 1863.

My Dear Mother:

I received your letter of the 23rd yesterday while on picket duty and it seems to me from the way in which you write that you did not receive my last letter. I don't think that it has been two weeks since I wrote you; 'twas soon after Harry Warren got back. We are at the same camp we were when Henry came. Our Brigade does picket on the river at Morton's Ford. We (that is, our Regiment) have to go on every fourth night. Night before last was a terrible night, cold and rainy, and the wind was pretty cutting. Our line is on the river bank, in a cornfield. The Yankees are on the other side, some four hundred yards distance. We have no communication with them, it being against

General Ramseur's orders. Battle's Brigade (Alabama troops) talk and exchange papers with them every day. They join our line above the ford. When we first went on picket at the river we could hear the Yankees' drums by the hundred. They stopped all at once and we did not hear more than two or three for a whole week. Yesterday morning they opened with their drums again and from the number it would seem that they have a large army across the river. I think they tried to make us believe they had left, but they can't fool General Lee. We have had orders for a week or more to keep two days' rations cooked and be ready to move at a moment's notice. I don't think that we shall remain much longer at this camp.

Some half-dozen cannons were heard up the river yesterday. I suppose they were signal guns. A pretty good sign of a movement. I hope we will soon do all the fighting that we expect to do this winter, and let us go into winter quarters. The orderly has just come around with orders to be in readiness to move, as the Yankees are advancing and we may probably leave this evening. All the preparation that I have to make is to look up our day's rations of bread. As soon as we go into camp to stay any length of time, I shall be glad to get my flannel drawers. I will let you know. I hope Dr. Thompson will be well enough to come when his furlough is out, and bring my overcoat, also a pair of socks, gloves (if you can find them) and a little box of lip salve. Tom Stith was waiting about a week before he got his things, which Henry Warren brought. He had to leave them at Orange

Court House, as he had to foot it about eighteen miles. Col. Grimes got back a few days ago from North Carolina. He was married while home and he is now a candidate for congress, and I think he will probably be elected. I would like very much to be at home with you to eat some of that nice fruit which you have. Peaches here in camp sell for \$2.00 per dozen, so we can't afford to eat as many as we want at that price, or it would take a month's wages to pay for the treat. Blake said for me to tell you to please tell Mr. Rhodes to send him thirty dollars by Thompson, if this reaches you in time; if not, send it by mail. Tom Stith says to tell some of his folks not to send him any blanket as yet. He will let them know.

I am enjoying excellent health at present. Sometimes I am troubled with diarrhœa, but I generally stop it by quit eating beef for a few days. Next time you write to Pussy, give her my best love and tell her I would like so much to see her. Give my love to all the family, and believe me, your sincere and devoted son,

WALTER.

Much obliged for the paper and envelopes.

ON MARCH NEAR RAPPAHANNOCK STA-
TION, VA., October 18, 1863.

My Dear Mother:

I received your very welcome letter and did intend answering it last evening, but we were ordered to move, which prevented me from doing so. We left

Rapidan about the 7th inst., and have been on the march ever since, and I believe it has been the hardest for the length of time that we have ever had. It was what might be termed a "flank movement" in every sense of the word. We marched through woods, fields and across branches, creeks and rivers as we came to them, only a few hours behind the Yankees all the time. Last Thursday we were drawn up in line of battle before day and our Division, with our sharpshooters in front, drove the Yankees through the woods and fields for two or three miles. Our sharpshooters killed and wounded a great many. Our Brigade took thirty or forty prisoners. A day or two before that we surprised a corps of Yankees in camp, hurrying them off rather unceremoniously. We all got our haversacks filled with crackers, which we very much needed, though we haven't suffered for anything to eat on the march. Gen. Ramsieur is very attentive to his men in that respect. Day before yesterday we were in four miles of Manassas. I did wish that we might go that far. I wanted to see the old place so much.

The rumor in camp is that Gen. Lee has accomplished everything he intended, that is, to drive the Yankees back and tear up this railroad, which we are doing to perfection; but for the grading and bent iron you would not know that there ever was a railroad along here. We cut down the telegraph wire also, and carried that along with us. We stopped on the march to-day, about 10 o'clock, after marching about eight miles. What it is for, I can't tell. I suppose

something is the matter with the road ahead, or probably the bridge across the Rappahannock needs repairing. It is now 4 o'clock. I expect we shall move nearer the river to camp, however it does not make much difference where we stop, as we have rations up till tomorrow evening. I wish you could have seen us cooking up three days' rations the other night, before attacking the Yankees the next day. We have flour and beef to cook and only about half the night to cook them in, without cooking utensils. We made up our dough on our gun cloths and cooked it on barrel staves and heads. You would be surprised to see how nice bread can be cooked on a ram rod. I think it is the sweetest bread that I ever ate. I think there must be something in the appetite also. Our beef we broiled on griddle irons made of telegraph wire. I think I was the first in our regiment to make one; since then nearly every man has one along with him. Col. Grimes detailed a blacksmith and sent him to me to get mine to make him one like it. He said it was the most useful thing he had seen. We cook bread on them also. Speaking of Col. Grimes, he just received a furlough to-day, and will leave for North Carolina in a few days. Dr. Thompson has not arrived yet, nor have we heard from him. I think the fall campaign is about over and I hope we will go into winter quarters somewhere on the railroad. I do want some sweet potatoes so much. Give my love to all the family, and believe me as ever,

Your devoted son,

WALTER.

P. S. I am truly glad that Dr. Harrell has got a position as surgeon. I hope he will be pleasantly situated. Please look in the watch pocket of my black satin vest, get my lip salve box, fill it with salve and send it in your next letter. This mountain wind keeps my lips split all to pieces. Tell Mr. Rhodes, Blake says he got the \$30.00 safely; much obliged to him. I believe I will send you a Yankee letter that I picked up the other day in the woods while we were pursuing them. I don't think peace is so near at hand as he does.

Much obliged for this envelope and paper, you got an answer sooner than you otherwise would, there is no suttler along with us and none of the boys carry such things with them, they cost so much, and the first rain would ruin them.

CAMP NEAR MORTON'S FORD, VA.,

November 11th, 1863.

My Dear Mother:

We are once more in our same camp on the Rapidan, which we left just a month ago. We had just begun to be comfortable in our winter quarters on the Rapahannock when the Yankees run us out. Last Saturday, about ten o'clock, the Yankees attacked our picket line on the river, composed of the Second and Thirtieth N. C. Regiments of our Brigade, driving them back, taking a great many of them prisoners. Col. Cox, of the Second, was badly wounded and afterwards died. The attack was a perfect surprise.

We had just drawn a large supply of winter clothing of every kind, and the men were just trying them on when we were ordered to fall in, which we did in double quick time, making for the river line of battle with our sharpshooters in front. 'Twas not long before we came on their skirmishers and a brisk fire commenced, which lasted until dark. Our two lines of battle laid within speaking distance until 12 o'clock that night, when we were very quietly withdrawn, half hour afterwards our sharpshooters followed and we took up our line of march till sun rise, when we were drawn up in line of battle, we stayed until two or three o'clock. The Yankees not coming on us, we started on the march again and never stopped till we crossed the Rapidan. We ate our breakfast Saturday morning in our winter quarters and did not draw a single mouthful to eat, or have any rest except when we were in line of battle (and then we were hard at work throwing up breastworks), until Monday night, ten o'clock. We waded the Rapidan about 9 o'clock the same night. I think it was the hardest time we have ever had, nothing to eat, accompanied with the hardest marching we ever did. All of our things were left in our winter quarters, expecting to go back there, but we did not, so we lost a good many things which we left behind. I happened to take my shawl and oil cloth along with me, which I saved. I lost my two blankets, a pair of cotton drawers, pair of socks, which I had just drawn (I did not draw anything else of the new clothing, which I am glad of, for I should have lost them). I also lost my knapsack,

tin plate, tin cup, etc. I saved my overcoat, with all the things you sent by Condon. That scrape has taught me a lesson. I'll bet I never leave anything else of mine behind. I don't care where we are ordered to.

Try and get Tom Stith to put the following things in with his own baggage: That worsted shirt, flannel shirt, flannel drawers, two pair socks, please send me a comb, coarse one, also a towel. Tom Stith will be judge of what he can bring besides those things. Tell him we are at the same camp that Henry Warren came to us at. If I have time I will write to him tomorrow. We have just as much to do now as we can attend to. We are on picket every third night (Nov. 12). We moved camp this morning about half mile nearer our picket line. Cannonading is occasionally heard on the other side of the river. I don't know what we will be doing, or where we will be tomorrow this time. I am perfectly willing for the Yankees to cross here, for I think we will whip them worse than we ever did at Fredricksburg. I shall be on picket tonight. I've got to go to work and get something to eat to carry with me. Give my love to all. As ever,

Your sincere and devoted son,

WALTER.

CAMP NEAR MORTON'S FORD, VA.,
December 3rd, 1863.

My Dear Mother:

I know you are anxious to hear from me, so I thought I would write, if not but a few lines, to let you hear from me and to know that I was well and

safe. We left this place to-day was one week ago. That night at 3 o'clock we left and went down the river towards Germania Ford, where the Yankees have crossed in heavy force. We got there late in the evening, and had some very sharp skirmishes with them before night. We were in line of battle all night; just before day we fell back a short distance and established our line of battle and commenced throwing up our breastworks in the coldest kind of a rain. We were in an old field on top of a hill, where the wind came with all its fury. The smoke from our fires was almost enough to kill a man. We were in that condition, expecting an attack by the Yankees day or night. We have to keep all of our things on all the time and one-half of the men up all night, in case of an attack. Yesterday morning we commenced moving about 2 o'clock, and at daylight we discovered that the Yankees had retreated across the river. Our Brigade was ordered to the front and we commenced the pursuit. We pretty soon commenced taking a few stragglers and by ten o'clock we have taken (from the looks of them as passed them on the road this morning) three or four hundred. They were the poorest Yankees I ever saw. They did not have one mouthful to eat and said they had not had any in four days. They stated as an excuse that our cavalry had captured their wagons. Several of them offered me \$2.00 a piece for crackers, but I told them we were rationed up for two days and I could eat everything in my haversack in one, so I could not spare them. I told them that they would draw something to eat pretty soon.

One of them gave me his knapsack and everything in it and then very politely asked me if I could spare him a cracker. I could not refuse him, for the things that he gave me unsolicited were very valuable. A pair of new shoes and a Yankee tent are things that money will not buy. I would not take \$25.00 for my tent which he gave me. They are large enough for two, and so light that you can roll them in your knapsack and not feel the weight at all. I could have gotten more little Yankee camp conveniences than I could carry, but we were then in line of battle, charging through the woods and I did not wish to bungle myself up too much. I do not know how long we shall stay here, but it's my opinion, not long. I hope it will be long enough for us to get rested and recruited again before we set out for another march. Tom Stith brought all the things which you sent by him, including the letters. I am too tired and worn out to write an interesting letter. I merely wrote to set your mind at ease. As soon as I can cook something I shall try and go to sleep. I haven't slept more than an hour at any time for nearly a week. My love to all. Write soon to your

Sincere and affectionate son,

WALTER.

CAMP IN WINTER QUARTERS, NEAR ORANGE
COURT HOUSE, January 10, 1864.

My Dear Mother:

I received your letter by mail, also the one you sent by Mixson. We were on picket at the time. Mixson

got here to-day (Sunday) week. We got back from picket last night, having spent one week on the banks of the Rapidan. We had two snows during the time, each one two or three inches deep. Though we did not suffer as one would suppose, who does not know how to fix up. My little Yankee tent came into requisition, so did my visor; you can't imagine the comfort there is in it while exposed to cold north winds. I thought I had written to you how I liked it. I used to think I wouldn't wear one, now I wouldn't be without it for anything. You say you wish I was in the office again. I do not. Though I was never allowed while there for something to eat, there were other things equally as disagreeable. I get enough to eat now, but none to waste and I feel much better satisfied. Our meat has been cut down to a quarter of a pound and they give us sugar, coffee, rice and sometimes dried fruit. We eat up everything they give us and feel hungry all the time. When they only give us a quarter of a pound of meat and a tin cupful of flour, it is not enough for a hearty man, but when they give us rice, peas, etc., we can make out very well. Peter Christman got a letter from his father yesterday, saying he was going to start with a load of boxes to-day (Sunday) week. I suppose he will come in May Warren's place. I need not tell you what to send me, for I know you will be certain to send me as much as I could ask for. I don't wish for you to send me anything that is scarce or high priced. Let it be something that you have a plenty of, so that you will not miss it. The things that you sent by Mixson came in

a very good time. He sent me some meat and potatoes while on picket. You can send me a little of that nice meal, if you have it to spare. You need not send any sage, just send a few pods of red peppers to boil with beef once in a while, when we draw it. I don't suppose we shall draw much more beef until next Spring. Please don't forget to send a small case knife, a fig stem for pipe, the size of your middle finger, about six inches long.

I am very well supplied with winter clothing of every kind at present. Just drawn a splendid pair of English shoes. The trip down the river cut my others all to pieces. I did want to send a pair of English shoes to brother, but it seems that I can't get ahead so that I can do so. If we didn't have any picket duty to do this winter, we should be just as comfortable as I could wish. But we have to go eight miles off every fifth week and spend the time out doors, don't make any difference what kind of weather it is. I don't suppose we shall have to go more than two or three times, though before we shall start on our next Spring's campaign, wherever that may be. Tell Bob to write whenever you do and let me know how he is getting along himself. Give my love to all the family, also to Puss whenever you write to her. Write as soon as is convenient and believe me, as ever,

Your sincere and affectionate son,

WALTER.

CAMP FOURTH NORTH CAROLINA REG'T.,
NEAR ORANGE COURT HOUSE, Jan. 26, 1864.

My Dear Folks:

Your letter of the 16th inst. received a few days ago. Mr. Christman and the boxes got here Sunday night. Everything came safely, with the exception of Tom Stith's box, that got stolen passing through Richmond; the practiced thieves around Richmond can steal anything.

You can't tell how I prize that middling of meat. It came in the very nick of time. I had just finished the ham and sausages which you sent by Nixson. The things which you have sent me will last me several weeks; with what I draw will give me just as much as I want by mixing rations. You don't know how selfish men become by soldiering two or three years. Two years ago when one received a box from home he was expected to ask the whole company up and tell them to help themselves, but that custom has played out. Now when a fellow buys anything or has anything sent him from home, the rest of the company don't expect to be asked to help themselves. Whoever one is messing with he is all that expects to share it with him; the whole company is messed off in pairs to suit themselves. I have been messing with Lang Mixson since we left Morton's Ford. He is the best messmate I have ever had. I will never mess with more than one at a time again. When two are together it enables them to cook and draw the rations for each other, when either is on duty. Mr. Winstead, our orderly, will leave in the morning for home. I shall

send this by Wm. Barnes, who will leave with Mr. Christman. Give my love to all.

Yours,

WALTER.

CAMP NEAR ORANGE COURT HOUSE, VA.,
February 8, 1864.

Dear Mother:

I received your letter last week and I had just commenced to answer it when I heard commotion at Morton's Ford. Our Brigade was on picket last week, one week sooner than our time, in consequence of Gen. Battle's and Johnston's Brigades having gone somewhere, I suppose to North Carolina. I was on camp guard at the time and was left for camp duty. Our Brigade had fallen in to start back to camp when our cannon on picket fired into the Yankees then graping. Before the boys could get to the breastworks, the Yankees had driven the picket line into them. They kept up a pretty sharp skirmish for three or four hours. The sharpshooters got so near to each other that they run and shot each other around a house, one Yankee was killed on the piazza of the house. There was only one man in our Brigade that was hurt, his name was W. A. Driver, belonging to our company. He was wounded on the skirmish line. The Yankees lost some ten or fifteen. We killed one of their Generals, but they succeeded in getting him across the river. That night our line of pickets were posted in their same old posts. We heard here in camp that the Yankees were about to take our breastworks.

Next morning, Sunday, Peter Christman and myself rolled up our things and by daylight were on our way to the breastworks. When we got there our army was lying in our breastworks and the Yankees were scattered all over the fields about a half-mile the other side of the river. All their cannons were in position and remained so during the day. There were two lines of artillery just the right distance from each other to do the best execution, frowning at each other the whole day, neither willing or inclined to commence the fight across the river.

Last night about ten o'clock, their camp fires all died out and this morning the Yankees were all gone, except their line of pickets.

We pretty soon started back to camp and got here an hour ago, and I am in hopes they will not trouble us any more this winter. The mountains in Yankee-dom were covered with snow this morning. I am in hopes we will have some shortly to put an end to all military operations for this winter. I will write again in a day or two. I am as tired as a horse at present, a tramp of ten miles through the mud ankle deep is enough to tire a mule. Give love to all.

As ever, your devoted son,

WALTER.

CAMP, FOURTH N. C., NEAR ORANGE COURT HOUSE,
February, 1864.

My Dear Mother:

I received your letter dated February 21st, Friday, and I should have answered it yesterday, but for the

want of time. Our Brigade has about one mile of plank road to ditch and grade and there is a very heavy detail from the Regiment every day. The whole regiment is on duty every day and will be for eight or ten days more. Those that are not on guard are at work on the roads. I came off guard this morning and will be on fatigue duty tomorrow until we make some move. We got orders this morning to cook up two days' rations and keep it on hand until further orders. I can't imagine what it is for. We have had so much nice weather for the past week or two. I think our General anticipates an attack. I don't like the idea of leaving our winter quarters this time of the year. We are bound to have some very severe weather yet. The day Cullen left, it snowed about two or three inches deep, and before the next day at 12 o'clock all traces of it had disappeared. It is warm enough at present to be without a fire. All are busy cooking up rations for fear we may have to leave. I haven't cut the ham you sent by Cullen, yet, and I have about half the middling which Mr. Christman brought me. I have one or two potatoes left yet. If we stay here until Spring, I think I shall have enough to last me. If you have an opportunity, I should like to have about a peck of peas. They go farther and do a man more good than anything that I know of.

I wish you would send my copy of Shakespeare; it's a brown colored back, with my name in it. Wrap it up and send it by May Warren, and ask him to give it to Pat Wooten; he promised to bring it for me. The needles you sent me are the very sizes I wanted. I

am very much obliged to you for them. You need not send me any more paper and envelopes until I let you know, as I have five or six on hand and I want to use them up first. I have not received the letter yet that General Battle undertook to deliver for sister. His Brigade has been back for some week or more. Give my love to all the family, and believe me, as ever,

Your sincere and affectionate son,

WALTER.

CAMP NEAR ORANGE C. H., March 29, 1864.

My Dear Mother:

I wrote you a short letter only a few days ago, but as some little excitement outside of our regular routine of duty has occurred within the past few days, I thought I would drop you a little history of it. Governor Vance arrived among us last Friday evening, and was the guest of General Daniel. He delivered a speech before that Brigade last Saturday evening. ALL the Generals of note in this army were present and on the stage with him, embracing Generals Lee, Ewell, A. P. Hill, Stewart, Wilcox, Rodes and a good many others whose names I did not know; there were some twelve or fifteen in number. I did not hear but a part of the speech, as the crowd was so large that I could not get in a hundred yards of him.

Yesterday there was a grand review of all the North Carolina troops that is in this Corps, by Gov. Vance, including the Cavalry. After the review the troops were all arranged around a stage erected for the purpose in the camp of the Thirtieth Regiment, and he

addressed them with a speech of three or four hours length. He had the whole assembly in an uproar in less than two minutes after he arose. He said it did not sound right to him to address us as "Fellow Soldiers," because he was not one of us—he used to be until he shirked out of the service for a little office down in North Carolina, so now he would address us as "Fellow Tar Heels," as we always stick.

I was in a good place to hear every word that he said, and I don't think I ever listened to a more able speech of the kind in my life. It was very able and deep, interspersed with anecdotes, illustration of his subject, which kept the men from feeling fatigued. The review took up some two hours, marching all over the fields, and then we had to stand up all the while the speech was being delivered. Nearly the whole camp was there, in fact, there were thousands that could not hear him from their distance. There was some dozen or two ladies present. After Gov. Vance got through, the crowd called for General Early. He arose and spoke a short time, then General Rodes; after he was through Gov. Vance arose again and said he must talk a little more, too. He related two or three anecdotes relative to the Yankee characters and then retired amidst deafening "Rebel Yells." This morning it's cold and has just commenced raining. I think it will end in a snow. The last of the big snow has gone. Clarke's mountain is covered yet. I forgot to tell you that I received your letter night before last. My love to all.

Believe me, as ever, yours, etc.

WALTER.

CAMP, WINTER QUARTERS, April 21st, 1864.

My Dear Sister:

Once more in our same old quarters, though we little thought a week ago that we would ever live to see them again. We had a very quiet time on picket this week, at the same time the most pleasant we have had this winter. Only one day and night of rain, the rest of the time the most delightful kind of weather. The boys when not on duty amused themselves at various sports, some fishing, some digging ground hogs out of their holes (an animal that I never saw until I came to Virginia), while nearly the whole regiment amused themselves gathering wild onions. The doctors recommend them very highly on account of their preventing scurvy. Gen. Ransom had a kettle for each company brought down the line, for the purpose of cooking them. We had one man from our regiment Company D. to desert while on his post. He left his gun and accoutrements and swam the river.

Last Tuesday the Yankees had a tremendous cannonading going on for upwards of two hours. Just across the river we could hear the balls flying through the air also hear them explode. The most reasonable supposition of the cause was that they were practicing previous to their attacking us. We have a rumor today that they have fallen back towards Centerville, whether it be true or not, there were plenty of them on the river this morning when we left. Col. Grimes took our band down with us this time, and every night they would get on a high bluff on the banks of the river and give the Yankees a serenade, closing with

“Dixie” and the “Old North State.” Sometimes one of their bands would strike up in answer. The week before we went down, there was a Yankee Sergeant deserted and came over to us, reporting that Grant was to have attacked us last Sunday morning. The whole picket force were under arms that morning two hours before day ready to receive him. I was on the outpost that night and just before day, could not help from wishing that they would come across and attack our breastworks. But Sunday came and passed and everything remained quiet on both sides.

The man who told you we were suffering for bread was mistaken. Our meat is very slim, though we make out very well. As for bread we get more than we can eat. There is not a man in our company who has not got him a bag of extra meal, gradually increased from his daily rations. We draw just as much sugar and coffee as we could wish for. Meat is the only thing we are stinted with. We have not drawn any beef or ham in a month or two. We have (that is General Lee has) just received an official telegram from North Carolina stating that Gen. Hoke had captured sixteen hundred prisoners and twenty-five pieces of cannon at Plymouth, that’s cheering news indeed, particularly from North Carolina. I hope Washington and Newbern may fall likewise. My love to all.

Your devoted brother,

WALTER.

A soldier of the Legion lay dying in Algiers,

There was lack of woman's nursing, there was dearth of
woman's tears;

But a comrade stood beside him, while his lifeblood ebbed
away,

And bent, with pitying glances, to hear what he might say.
The dying soldier faltered, and he took that comrade's hand,

As he said, "I never more shall see my own, my native land;
Take a message, and a token, to some distant friends of mine,

For I was born at Bingen,—at Bingen on the Rhine."

His trembling voice grew faint and hoarse,

His grasp was childish, weak,—

His eyes put on a dying look,—

He sighed and ceased to speak.

His comrade bent to lift him,

But the spark of life had fled,—

The soldier of the Legion in a foreign land is dead!

And the soft moon rose up slowly,

And calmly she looked down

On the red sand of the battle-field,

With bloody corpses strewn,

Yes, calmly on that dreadful scene

Her pale light seemed to shine,

As it shone on distant Bingen,—fair Bingen—on the Rhine.

—CAROLINE E. NORTON.

IN LINE OF BATTLE NEAR SPOTSYLVANIA

COURT HOUSE, VA., May 14, 1864.

My Dear Folks:

Through the kind providence of the Almighty God I have come out so far safe and sound and am spared once more to gladden your hearts by writing you. I scarcely know what to write you about or where to commence. Pen cannot describe or words relate the many adventures which we have passed through during the past ten days. We have been fighting to-day, makes eleven days and we have repulsed and whipped the Yankees every time they have attacked us. God only knows how much longer the battle will last, but if

we are as successful in the future as we thus far have been, Grant may continue the battle for a month so far as I care. In that time I don't think he will have a single man left. His loss up to the present time is estimated at seventy thousand. Our loss is comparatively small, as we fought them most of the time in our breastworks. Last Sunday is the first time our brigade had any regular engagement with the enemy, though we had charged them several times and run them from their positions without firing a gun.

Last Sunday about 8 o'clock it was ascertained that the Yankees had made a flank movement and were making for Richmond by Spotsylvania Court House. We were almost worn out with fatigue from marching or loss of sleep when we started from this place to front them. I don't think I ever saw a hotter day in all my life. The men were fainting by the dozens, and very frequently one would drop dead in his tracks from overheating. The distance was about eighteen miles. We had gotten in about six miles of the place, when Gen. Ramseur rode down the line with a dispatch from Gen. Longstreet stating that he had repulsed the enemy with heavy loss, and that if the troops could hold out to get there in time to meet the second attack, in case the enemy made one, everything would be right.

He appealed to his brigade to know if they would go. The answer was a shout that we would. Some of the men were so tired and worn out they could hardly halloo. I was among that number, when in about three miles of this place I was forced to drop

from overheat, and the brigade left me. I never hated anything so bad in all my life before, so much as to be left behind as then. The brigade had left about an hour when I heard the enemy's cannon open. It was like an electric shock to me, I bounced up and determined to go or die. I threw away everything I had but my gun and accoutrements, including three days' rations that I had not tasted since drawing them (without thinking where I was to get any more), and caught up with the brigade in about fifteen minutes before we charged the enemy and fought them until after dark. Our loss this night was small. The night was spent in building our breastworks.

Last Thursday though is the day that will be remembered by both armies as long as one man is left to tell the tale. At daylight they attacked the line a little to our right, drove our men out of both lines of breastworks and the result was hanging in the scales when our brigade was taken from one position and moved around in front of them. The stars and stripes were floating proudly all along our works when the order was given to "forward without firing." We commenced moving up pretty briskly, when our men commenced falling so fast, that the order was given to "double quick." No sooner said than done. We rushed forward with a yell and took the first line of works like a flash. We remained there long enough to fire a round or two and clear the way in front of us, when the order came to charge the other. We took that also with a large number of prisoners, then the fight commenced in earnest. It was a continuous

charge and a war of musketry from that time, nine o'clock, until three o'clock in the morning, when we evacuated that line for another which had been established and fortified during the night. There is not a man in this brigade who will ever forget the sad requiem, which those minie balls sung over the dead and dying for twenty-two long hours; they put one in mind of some musical instrument; some sounded like wounded men crying; some like humming of bees; some like cats in the depth of the night, while others cut through the air with only a "Zip" like noise. I know it to be the hottest and the hardest fought battle that has even been on this continent. You would hardly recognize any of us at present. Every one looks as if he had passed through a hard spell of sickness, black and muddy as hogs. There was no one too nice that day to drop himself behind the breastworks. Brigadiers and Colonels lay as low in the trench and water as the men. It rained all that day and night, and the water was from three to six inches deep all along. If it had been winter the last man would have been frozen. I am too worn out to write anything of any interest. I am about half dead yet, as is every one else from the effects of the cannonading. My love to all, and believe me, your sincere son,

WALTER.

IN LINE BATTLE NEAR SPOTTSYLVANIA
COURT HOUSE, VA., May 17, 1864.

My Dear Mother:

Again by kind Providence I am permitted to write you a short letter. There has been no general engage-

ment since I last wrote you. Fights and skirmishing are kept up along the line. Our brigade is now the extreme left of the whole army. Cavalry joins us on our left. What Grant is waiting for it is impossible to say. It is rumored through camps that he has gone to Washington to consult with Lincoln. I do not think it is possible to have any harder fighting than we had last Thursday. Our brigade did some of the hardest fighting that day and night that has been done during the war. It is hard to realize what our brigade did actually accomplish that day. That morning at day break the enemy attacked Johnston's whole division and took their breastworks from them, together with fifteen or twenty pieces of artillery, which endangered the whole of Evill's corps, owing to the nature of the position which he held. Our brigade after, we had charged and run the Yankees from their works, was not long enough to cover the line held by Johnston's division, so the Yankees held a position on our right, upon a hill which enabled them to keep up an incessant enfilading fire upon us; two thirds of the men which we lost were done in that way. Men were killed while squatting just as low and as close to the breastworks as it was possible for them to get. Tom Atkinson, poor fellow, was shot through the head, right by my side, another man in Company "E" was killed on the other; the man in front was shot through the body. I did not realize then what a hot place we were in. It was a wonder to me that the last one of us was not killed. We

were exposed to that fire for twenty-two hours. Gen. Rodes sent word to Gen. Ramseur he would send his reinforcements, but Gen. R. sent him word that he had taken the position and he was confident his brigade would hold it. All he wanted to let us alone and send us ammunition, which he did. I shot away 120 rounds of cartridges myself, three cartridge boxes full.

Friday morning about an hour before day, we evacuated the works, which had been thrown up during the night by the entire pioneer force of the whole army. I don't suppose there is any man that can express the relief he felt after getting out of such a place. Our rations were out the evening before and we had orders to be ready to move next morning at 3 o'clock. We did not have time to fill our canteens, so we did not have a mouthful to eat or drink when we went into the fight. The ditches behind the works were from three to six inches deep in mud and water, and in addition to it it was raining incessantly from light that morning until we left the works the next morning after.

You can form some idea what our feelings would have been, putting all these privations together, had there been no danger attending, but add to all this the thought that the next minute may be your last, is another thing altogether. There is not a man in this brigade who will ever forget it. I forgot to mention in my last that Burton's leg was broken and he fell in the hands of the enemy. Pat Wooten was also wounded on the leg. Hoping that kind Providence

may spare me to see the end of this great struggle, I remain, as ever, your sincere and affectionate son,

WALTER.

WINDER HOSPITAL, RICHMOND,
SECOND DIVISION, WARD 28,

May 25th, 1864.

Dear Mother:

You will undoubtedly be surprised and I fear alarmed to receive a letter from me at this place. But do not let your mind feel any uneasiness at all. Kind providence has so far favored me that I have passed through another very severe battle with only a skin wound on the inside of my knee. Though the exposure that we had to endure that evening and night (Thursday, the 19th inst.), was most too much for me. We fought for three or four hours in the evening, in a drenching rain, until night coming on, we rectified our lines, threw up some little breastworks with our bayonets, anticipating a night attack by the Yankees. Our lines were in speaking distance of each other. The Yankees would give us a cheer, then our boys would answer with a deafening Rebel Yell. Gen. Ramseur hallooed out to them twice, "Come on Yankees," but they did choose to do so, though I believe they tried to make their men charge us, as we would hear their commands to that effect. We lay there about half the night, in the mud and water, behind our little mound of earth thrown up with our bayonets and hands, when we were ordered to fall back as quietly as possible.

Such a command at such a time puts a strange feeling on a person, a relief to the mind which I can't describe, nor any one realize, but those who have once been placed in that situation. I always have had a horrible idea of a night attack, and I do hope I may never have to encounter one. We marched back to our breast-works that night (about six miles). . Reached there about day break; since then I have been troubled with weakness in the back and a general exhaustion from over fatigue. I was not able to keep up and do duty with the regiment, so I was sent off with a lot of wounded, as that was no place for a sick man, looking for a big fight at any moment. I think I shall be recruited enough in a week or so to return. Don't feel any anxiety on my account, as everything may turn out for the best. Write me at this place as soon as you receive this.

Yours, etc.,

WALTER.

Don't either of you get uneasy on my account and try to come out here. I will let you know if I get bad off to need your attention. I have written you two letters since the fighting commenced; did you receive them? Send me a sheet of paper as soon as you receive this, and I will write you again immediately.

CAMP NEAR BUNKER HILL, VA., Aug. 30, 1864.

Dear Mother:

I take this occasion to drop you a few lines, as you will be more likely to get it if I send it by Capt. Thompson than by mail. I got with the regiment last Sat-

urday at Bunker Hill, as they fell back from Charlestown. We went into camp and remained quietly until yesterday morning when the Yankees advanced on Martinsburg pike. We were thrown in line of battle and remained so all day; the Yankees having retired we went back into camp a little after dark. We received orders last night to be ready to move this morning at sunrise. 'Tis now about eleven o'clock and we are still in camp and will probably remain here the remainder of the day, though two or three days is a long time for us to remain in camp without some move. The boys all seem to be in very good spirits, though they look quite thin from the hard marching they have had to do since they left Richmond. It's my opinion that the army will fall back towards Strasburg in a few days, though it's only a conjecture of my own. I have been in excellent health ever since I left home, though at times I have had the blues pretty bad. I begin to feel perfectly at home and everything begins to feel like old times. I am in hopes we have done most of our hard marching that is the only thing I am dreading now. The weather has turned some cooler, the nights are quite cool, making a heavy blanket feel quite comfortable.

Tell Mr. Rhodes that Blake is with the Company and is looking very well, he was only at the hospital a few days from being broken down. He is asleep now, or I would ask him if he wished to send any message. Write soon. My love to all the family. I remain as ever,

Your sincere and affectionate son,

WALTER.

UNITED STATES PRISONERS CAMP,
POINT LOOKOUT, MD., Sept. 29, 1864.

My Dear Mother:

At the battle of Winchester, fought the 19th of this month, myself, together with seven others of our company, were captured, namely Henry Warren, Emerson Winstead, Pat Wooten, Bunyan Barnes, Edwin Barnes, Byrant Stokes and Joel Taylor. All of us are in very good health. All of us have written although some of our letters may be lost. Give my love to all the family. Please write as soon as you receive this. Direct me care of Major Brady, Provost Marshal. Let me know whether Blake was killed or wounded. Goodbye, believe me as ever

Your sincere and affectionate son,

WALTER.

When I remember all
The friends, so linked together,
I've seen around me fall,
Like leaves in wintry weather,
I feel like one
Who treads alone
Some banquet hall deserted,
Whose light are fled,
Whose garlands dead,
And all but he departed;
Thus, in the stilly night,
Ere slumber's chain has bound me,
Sad memory brings the light
Of other days around me.

—THOMAS MOORE.

CAMP THREE MILES NORTH OF PETERSBURG,
Christmas Day, Dec. 25, '64.

My Dear Mother:

I intended to have written the day after getting here, but it rained all day and the coldest kind of a rain too. The next day we received orders to move. We had almost completed our winter quarters and the boys hated to leave very much. We did not think at the time we should ever come back again, though some men from each company was left in camp to take care of the things. I was the one from our company left.

Last Thursday about sunset the division left and camped in a mile or two of Drury's Bluff, some ten miles from here. Last night about 9 o'clock they returned. We shall complete our quarters in two or three days now. To-day being Sunday and Xmas too, the boys think we should rest. It is the gloomiest Xmas that I ever saw. We not only miss the extras which we have had heretofore, but we have not got as much meat or bread as we can eat. The Xmas dinner promised to Lee's army, I see in the papers, has been postponed until New Year's day. I doubt then whether we get any as we are not in the intrenchments, though I think we deserve it as much as they do. We have done as much hard fighting and as for the marching we have done all. The boys were all very glad to see us. Gen. Grimes happened to ride by as I arrived and was pulling my things off. He stopped and had quite a long chat, he seemed right glad to see me back. Col. Venable, one

of Gen. Lee's staff, told Gen. Grimes, who is in command of the division now, to make his men as comfortable as possible, that we would in all probability remain here all the winter, unless something turned up unforeseen at present. I am in hopes it may be so, for I think our division needs rest if any troops in the army do. I understand we came here to relieve some of the troops in the fortification, but as they had made themselves comfortable, they would not be relieved. They preferred to remain in the works on the front line. I think they are sensible too, for I expect they will have us running all around, just as we did the past two or three days, all winter. I almost wish we had been sent South instead of Hoke's division. In passing through Raleigh I staid all night at the "Way-Side-Inn." Next morning in rolling up my blankets I forgot to put my socks in and came off and left them. I never hated anything so bad in my life. Just think they were the only extra pieces of clothing I took along, and then should lose them. If McBride has not left before you receive this please send me another pair. If you have any extra butter at the time just wrap a rag around a small ball and get him to bring that along. It is the best way to send it in cold weather. He will have to walk about a mile from where the cars stop to our camp. The cars stop two miles this side of Petersburg, for fear of being shelled. Blake has gone to Petersburg today on a pass. He is looking very well. I called to see uncle Richard while in Raleigh, the only relative I

saw. Raleigh has sadly changed in four years. Give my love to all the family.

Your affectionate son,

WALTER.

CAMP FOURTH NORTH CAROLINA REGIMENT,

NEAR PETERSBURG,

COX'S BRIGADE, RODES' DIVISION,

W. VA., January 15, 1865.

My Dear Mother:

McBride came night before last and brought everything safely, except the butter. He looked all over his baggage and we searched the box thoroughly, but could not find it. The articles which you sent me were the very articles which we needed most, especially the peas. We draw one third of a pound of meat now and we make out very well. You need not send me any more meat, as you need that more than we do. Send such things as peas, potatoes and such things as you make plenty of and do not have to buy. We are very comfortably fixed up in our winter quarters now. We have been busy cleaning up for the past two weeks and I shall be glad when we finish. The boys have gone into these quarters with less spirit than any we have ever built. We would not be surprised at any moment to receive marching orders, and none of us have any idea of staying here until spring. The greater part of the soldiers seem to be in low spirits and a good many say the Confederacy has "gone up" (as they term it), and that we are whipped. I have never seen the men so discouraged before. I hear also that the men are deserting the front lines and

going home by large squads. If this is true and it is continued long, the Yankees will whip us certain. It is the opinion here that Richmond is to be evacuated this winter. That has a very demoralizing effect on the men also. I hardly think that General Lee will risk a battle around Richmond in the spring, unless he gets more men. I don't think there will be any general engagement here during the winter. The sharpshooters keep everything alive on the lines day and night. Every dark and cloudy night they keep up such a heavy fire as to resemble a line of battle; although we are some four miles off, we hear every musket that is fired, as distinctly as if it was fired in our own camp. Every two or three days the batteries on each side take a notion to have a little duel, and for an hour or two there is a cannon shot for nearly every minute, then gradually dies out. It used to make me feel a little uneasy at first, for when we were in the valley and heard a cannon every man would fix up his things, and by the time he got that done, marching orders would come, but here we do not mind it any more than if nothing was going on. The box of blankets which we sent to Richmond last winter, and the one in which my shawl was packed, came the other day. Lieut. Wells expects to go home in a few days and I shall send it home by him. I drew a new blanket and also a pair of good woolen socks which, with the ones you sent me by Mac, will last me the rest of the winter.

Give my love to all.

Your affectionate son,

WALTER.

CAMP FOURTH NORTH CAROLINA REGIMENT,
NEAR PETERSBURG, January 18, 1865.

Dear Sister:

I send by the boy Church, a pair of shoes, a pair of socks. Brother can have the shoes fixed up and wear them. I guess they will fit him. I never expect to wear them again. The socks only need a little darning to make them serviceable. I shall let you know when I shall need any more. The book I send is a pretty story of the present war. Everything seems to be unusually quiet. I understand picket firing has been stopped on the lines. We haven't heard any for several days, neither have we heard any cannonading. The peace question is all the excitement in camp now. From what I saw in the "Examiner" this morning I think myself there is something in the wind. I do hope peace will be made before spring. The men are getting very discouraged, and to tell the truth, they have cause to be. Some of our regiment was down on the lines Sunday, and they say the troops have not had any meat for five days. If the men are not fed they will not stay with the army. They are deserting from the lines every night, and going to the Yankees. Don't send me anything else that you will have to buy, or need before the end of the year. We expect to go on picket this coming Sunday, to be gone a week. My love to all.

Your devoted brother,

WALTER.

CAMP FOURTH NORTH CAROLINA REGIMENT,
NEAR PETERSBURG, VA., Jan. 29, 1865.

My Dear Folks:

I received your letter dated 20th inst., yesterday, which made nine days that it has been on the way.

Last week we spent on the front lines doing picket duty in the place of Scales Brigade which has been sent off. We had an awful time; the whole week it rained, and sleeted part of the time, and the rest of the time, it kept up the coldest wind that I ever felt. The men on vidette had to be relieved every half hour, to keep from freezing. One man in our regiment got so cold he could hardly talk when he was relieved. On the right of our brigade, the Yankees were some six or eight hundred yards off, but on the left we were near enough to talk to each other in an ordinary tone of voice, though we were not allowed to speak to them or to communicate with them in any way. We had two men to desert our regiment and go to the enemy. They were two brothers. I am afraid we will have more desertions in the spring than we have ever had yet. The men are getting very much dissatisfied. The Consolidation Bill, which is to be carried into effect shortly will cause a good deal of desertion among our best soldiers. I am afraid our company and regiment will lose their name after all the hard service which we have done since the commencement of the war. There are a good many peace rumors circulating through camp, which gives the men something to talk about. I fear it will all end in another summer's hard fighting. If Blake comes by home, when he starts

back, you may send me a gallon of peas and some potatoes. You need not send anything that you will have to buy. I expect we draw as much meat here in the army as you can afford to eat at home. I hope something will turn up by spring which will enable me to go home. I should like very much to see a good crop growing on our little places. What does brother intend doing in case the war continues? I hope he will never have to go. If he does, anything is preferable to infantry in the field.

Give my love to all.

Yours affectionately,

WALTER.

CAMP. COX'S BRIGADE, NEAR PETERSBURG, VA.,
February 14, 1865.

My Dear Mother:

I would have written on receipt of your letter and box, which you sent me, but the troops were off at the time and there was no means of mailing a letter. Our division was ordered down on the extreme right last Sunday a week ago, to meet the Yankees at Hatcher's Run. Our division was not engaged; the other two divisions of our corps did some fighting before we got there. The troops were gone about a week, and they suffered considerably from the cold. It was snowing and sleeting when they left. I missed the pleasure of that trip. I have been permanently detailed at brigade headquarters in charge of a guard, to guard quartermaster's stores, and things generally among the wagon yards. I have three in charge, and all I have to do is to see that they do their duty. We

have our quarters separate, and nothing to do but keep up one post at night. We have no other duty whatever to do, not even to answer to roll call. Capt. Jones, our A. A. General, who gave me the detail, told me to select my own men, so I took one from our company, so that I might have an agreeable bedfellow and messmate. George Winstead is his name. Wiley Winstead's brother. I am just as comfortably fixed now as I could wish to be out here. I shall miss all the trips the troops will have to make during the winter, such as picket duty, and all raids to head off the "Yankees" unless we break up this camp entirely. Our brigade goes on picket this morning, Saturday. I am very much obliged to you for the box of provisions.

I expect there is a movement on hand now, as there is an order to issue three days' rations to the men. Marching orders do not trouble me so much now, as the guard is always apt to guard the forage, etc., which is left in camp. I think of home every time I take out my little ball of butter to eat with a roasted potato at night before bed time. George Winstead got a few potatoes from home the same day my box came. I generally spend most of my time reading whatever I am able to borrow. I wish I could get something that would be more useful to me than novels. I hope Blake got my shawl home all safe. Give my love to all the family. Dossey has just been in to see me on his way back to camp. He has been to Petersburg on business for Gaston. He is very well.

Your sincere and affectionate son,

WALTER.

WAGON YARD, COX'S BRIGADE, NEAR
PETERSBURG, VA., March 23rd, 1865.

My Dear Mother:

I received your letter, bearing the date of March 14th, a few minutes ago. It seems that about nine days is the average length of time for a letter to come from home here. I wrote you a letter just before we left the old camp, which you have doubtless received ere this. We have moved twice since I wrote that letter. After the first move, we were temporarily attached to Mahone's Division, the last move we made we joined our own division, which is in the entrenchments in front of Petersburg. Our Brigade is on the extreme left of it, between the Appomattox River and Swift Creek, with the river between us and the Yankees.

I have not been down on the lines since we last moved, but I hear that it is a very good place, inasmuch as we will hardly be attacked in our front as long as we stay there. I am still staying with Capt. Faircloth in the Q. M. Department, but when the campaign opens, I expect to go back to the company, as every man that can handle a gun will be needed there. Richmond and Petersburg have not been evacuated yet, tho' there is still rumors that the latter place will be. The papers are not allowed to publish any war news, so we are as completely ignorant as you are as to what is going on. I am very uneasy for fear that Sherman's army will not be checked before we have to evacuate Richmond and Peterburg. If that army could only be whipped, and it must be, or we can't

stay in Virginia, I would still feel confident of the final results. There are a good many of our soldiers deserting to the enemy, but I am in hopes we will have enough left to keep the Yankees in check on this line. I feel a good deal of anxiety on account of Cullen's having to go in service so soon. I would not have him join this regiment for anything. If he cannot obtain a better place, I will try and get him into Manley's Battery from Raleigh, which, if he does have to go into active service right away, will be the best place that I can think of. It is on the lines, some two miles to our left, where it has been about ten months, without losing a man in battle. If he was in that company, he would see a much easier time than he would in Infantry, being small, he would be very apt to be made a driver and in time of fights hold the horses in the rear, or in some place where they can be sheltered. What time will he be seventeen? Write to me as soon as you receive this, and let me know what he thinks about it. In the meantime, I will go over to Manley's Battery and see if I can get him in. I fear that it will be full, as I know a good many young men who joined on coming seventeen. It is a very good company and composed of a great many very nice men. I knew some of them before the war. I am intimately acquainted with all of the officers. Baz. Manley is Capt. Bunny Guion, James Powell and James McKimmon, the Lieutenant, all from Raleigh. Tell Cullen to take my advice and never join this Regiment as long as he can avoid it. However much I would like to have him with me. I am giving him this advice for his





Walter.

own good. Please think about the matter and write me immediately. Give my love to all the family. Where is sister? Is she at Wilson? I will write again in a few days, probably before I hear from you. Tell Cullen to write when you do. Goodbye.

Your affectionate son,

WALTER.

Alas, these letters are all that is left of the two noble sons and brothers, for George was killed at the battle of "Seven Pines" while Walter died from exposure after that terrible battle he so vividly describes in one of his letters. "*Requiescat in pace*" to all who fell in those days in that cruel war.

"All quiet along the Potomac," they say,
Except now and then a stray picket
Is shot as he walks on his beat, to and fro,
By a rifleman hid in the thicket;
'Tis nothing, a private or two, now and then,
Will not count in the news of the battle,
Not as officers lost—only one of the men
Moaning out, all alone the death rattle."

—ETHEL LYNN BEERS.

“What are we set on earth for? Say, to toil—
Nor seek to leave thy tending of the vines,
For all the heat o’ the day, till it declines,
And Death’s mild curfew shall from work assoil.
God did anoint thee with His odorous oil,
To wrestle, not to reign; and He assigns
All thy tears over, like pure crystallines,
For younger fellow-workers of the soil
To wear for amulets. So others shall
Take patience, labor, to their heart and hand,
From thy hand and thy heart, and thy brave cheer,
And God’s grace fructify through thee to all.
The least flower with a brimming cup, may stand
And share its dew-drop with another near.”

—ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING.

CHAPTER VIII.

MY FIRST SCHOOL DAYS.

The first school I attended was more of a kindergarten than for study. My teacher, Miss Hood, called "Tump" by her closest friends, permitted me to do much like I was inclined, and the time I spent in learning the alphabet, if properly applied, would have taken me well along in the speller. In my efforts to master the "A. B. C.'s," I reached the letter "O" and here I spent days and weeks. It seemed so easy compared with the ones I had struggled with that on my second trial I stood by the teacher's knee, she pointed with pencil to the little fat letter, I cried out in delight, "O here she is." The children hearing it began to laugh, and of course that made me repeat "O here she is" again, and the teacher could get me no farther down the line until she began with "Z" and worked upwards, where I was delighted to meet my old friend again and make the children laugh by saying "O here she is." As the years have passed I have observed that all my sorrows and all my joys have begun with the exclamation of that little round letter "O."

Then I was advanced a grade higher, and Mrs. Noble, a lady both noble by name and nature, undertook the work of teaching me. She had three boys

and one girl whom she taught at her own home, and out of the abundance of a good heart, knowing the burden my poor mother was carrying, offered to take me as a pupil.

One morning my father was so ill he decided to send for a lawyer and make his will, always wanting to save my mother all worry possible. His farm, "White Oaks," had now become valuable for cotton and tobacco. With a large fruit orchard, and near a railroad had increased its value.

When Mr. Hood, the lawyer, came, he told him that he wanted to bequeath that land to his first children, and the lots and land in around town, with household goods and personal effects, to my mother, knowing she would make a fair division of his property. "Well, Mr. Lee," said Mr. Hood, "what will you do with 'Aunt Pallas'?" "Old woman, call her in here," he said. Mother did as requested, and Aunt Pallas soon appeared at the door.

"Pallas," said my father, "I am making my will, and I want to know if you still object to being set free at my death? I have tried, year after year, Mr. Hood, to give her freedom, but she always declined, saying she could not take care of herself, and we could not take care of the children without her. Now I am determined to leave my business in such condition there will be no bother to my wife, who has had to work so hard ever since she married me, that I want her last days to be free from care so far as I am concerned. Pallas what do you say to your freedom now?"

“Lawsa massey Mars Charlie I ain’t got no notion of bein’ a free niggah. No sah I ain’t, don’t put dat down in black and white, cause I shore don’t want no more freedom dan I has already got. I thankee, Mars Charlie, just de same.”

“Well, Pallas, do you want to stay here with my wife and these children, or go and live with some of the older ones? You know you came from Col. Hinton.”

“No sah, Mars Charlie, I don’t want to leave Miss Candace and dese chillun.”

“Well, which one do you want me to put you down in the will as owning you?” “Now, Mars Charlie, I reckon Betsey will need me longer dan de balance, so I’ll belong to de baby.”

Not wanting to separate from my mother, I know now why she chose me to be her owner; surely we all owned her, dear old faithful mammy, as she was, and loved her too, not as much as she deserved, but we each and all loved her as our own.

Of all the thoughts of God that are
Borne inward into souls afar,
Along the Psalmist's music deep,
Now tell me if there any is,
For gift or grace surpassing this,
"He giveth His beloved sleep."

—ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING.

CHAPTER IX.

MY FATHER'S DEATH AND BURIAL.

A few months passed, the Battle of Bull Run had been fought, and Jefferson Davis elected President of the Southern Confederacy. My father was evidently forgotten, for the time being, by his neighbors who had such artistic taste, but that insidious disease did not forget to make such inroads on his health that he had to quit business and take to his bed. I was nearly six years old then, and Aunt Pallas had told me of "Sandy Claus," as she called him, and how many pretty things he brought good children. "Now Betsey, when Christmas comes, you mus' be shore and hang up yer stockin' in de parlor in de great house" (another of her names for our dwelling).

The kitchen and dining room, with a room for herself, was only a few feet away from the house, just far enough to keep out the fumes of the cooking, a horror all Southerners have to this day, of this odor from the kitchen.

Each day I begged her to tell me how much nearer Christmas was, the time seemed so long and I wondered if Christmas ever would come. Aunt Pallas kept me informed of the nearness, and I remember

when she said, "Betsey only three more nights and old Sandy'll shore be heah."

I went to bed feeling so pleased, but after I had been sleeping sometime, Rilia awoke me, and I, more asleep than awake, was told that my father was going on a long journey and I must go and bid him goodbye. She carried me into father's room; standing around his bedside were all my brothers and sisters. My poor mother, kneeling at the head sobbing, but hushed as soon as I was taken in the room.

Rilia held me so that my father clasped me in his arms and, folding me to his heart, gasped "God bless my baby." I kissed him and gave him a little hug. I said "Goodbye father, bring me a pretty when you come back." Amid sobs from the family I was put back to sleep in my little trundle-bed.

The next morning I was dressed by my sisters and sent out to the kitchen to Aunt Pallas. The moment I saw her, I began, "How long before Sandy Claus comes?" "Tomorrow night honey, but laws a massey on my soul Sandy Claus has done and died this night, and he'll never come back heah again to put candy and oranges in yer stockin', poah little Betsey," and here she began to wipe her eyes. I remembered she often told me I could not do a thing and then she would change her mind and let me do it and I felt sure she was not going to let Sandy Claus stay dead, and not fill my stocking, and felt so certain I did not even think very long of what she had said.

That day I was not permitted to go in the "great

house" at all, but the family would come out and look at me, take me in their arms and say "Poor little Bettie" or "poor little Laura." When I saw my mother again she was dressed in black and so were my sisters. I had forgotten about the night before and bidding goodbye to my father, when mother said, "You poor little darling, your father has gone to heaven, and you must be a good little girl if you ever want to see him again." I thought in my childish way that heaven was a little farther away than Raleigh and I must be very good.

The day and night passed, another day dawned and I well remembered *that was the night* to hang up my stocking for good old Santa Claus to fill. Rather than Aunt Pallas should discourage me about his being dead, a thing I did not understand, I made up my mind to keep quiet on the subject, but when night came to hang up the stocking where she told me in the "great house." At the time the family had gone out to supper I took my little stocking and quietly opened the parlor door and slipped into the room, as I remembered Aunt Pallas had told me to do, and there in the middle of the floor, on something like chairs, was a big black box, with candles burning at the head and foot. I was so frightened of this scary looking thing, my little knees were shaking so I could hardly pass this black "bogy" and reach the fire place and the hook that Aunt Pallas said was to hold the stocking. I suddenly remembered she had always told me that "hants" had been seen in many places, and they had always been "big white things" or "big black things."

Instantly I was seized with the thought that this was a "hant" sure enough, as Aunt Pallas would say, but there was no time to lose, for I must hang up that stocking. I had waited so long for the time to come, and now that it was here I just wouldn't be afraid of a "hant," and didn't my mother say for me to be "good," and that meant not to cry, as I would surely do if I kept so scared of a "hant." Grasping my stocking tightly I ran around the big black box and hung it up, feeling the cold chills creeping over me. I ran quickly by the "hant," and closing the door ran out into the kitchen shaking with fright.

"Why Betsey how white you are chile, come along and let Aunt give you some supper and put you to bed." Two or three times that night I awoke screaming at the "big black bogy."

When morning came I was dressed in a Sunday frock, for Rilia said I was going to the funeral. As I didn't know what that meant I wasn't bothered except to wonder if my stocking was full and if that "big black hant" was in the front room or not. I started to peep in but saw so many men doing something to this black box and putting it in another, I had no time to look for the coveted stocking, for they closed the door; then after breakfast I ran back and saw the box and "black bogy" were all out and gone. I ran to the fireplace and found the poor little stocking laying empty on the hearth, where in my fright the night before it must have fallen. Picking it up I began to weep as if my heart was broken, and when asked by Nealie, who ran to see what was the mat-

ter with me, I cried aloud in my deep despair, that "Sandy Claus" had died and never put anything in my stocking. My mother and sisters hearing this wail of sorrow, instead of trying to pacify me, as they used to do, joined in with me and we all wept so long and loud that I hushed in sheer surprise.

While this was happening to us I was taken out by Aunt Pallas, dressed in warm clothes and wraps, and together we went in the barouche that took us for a long drive, till I cried again because "Sandy Claus" didn't put anything in my stocking, then fell asleep. When I awoke we were following that big black box again in an orchard, with the apples shrivelled on the ground. At last we came to a place where everybody stopped and even the big box stopped, then men began to let it down in a hole, and taking spades, the clay and dirt was put back and a man dressed in black was talking and everybody was crying. I began to think that "Sandy Claus" was dead to them too, and would never fill my stocking, so I set up another wail that made Aunt take me back to the barouche and get me something to eat, and then the people walking and driving started back again.

When I reached home Rilia, my half sister, said, "You poor little thing, to hang up your stocking and not get a thing. Tell me when and where you hung it." I told her as it happened to me and what Aunt said about Sandy Claus being dead. "Honey you hang it up again tonight, just to show Pallas that he is not dead. I just bet anything you get that little stocking filled tonight." I said, "O sister you know

how to bring old Sandy Claus back again, don't you?" "Yes, I do, and I will, too."

That night I was tired and went to bed early, but I did not forget to hang up the stocking again. Rilia helped me and I hung it in my mother's room. The next morning I was called by sister Rilia, "Get up Bettie and see what Santa Claus has brought you." There staring at me with black beady eyes, was a lovely rag doll and a lot of candy, oranges and peanuts in a box and a piece of silver money in the toe of the stocking. O what happiness to know that Santa Claus still lived and loved me! Even now I bless that half sister for the deed that gave me back my hope and faith in dear old Santa Claus, though I never forget on Christmas day that long ride and the walk through the orchard and seeing the large crowd of men standing bare headed while the big black box was let down into that hole and filled with clay. There steals a sadness over me despite the long years that have passed, that I cannot shake off, even when I see my little grand children happy around my knee.

Three years after moving to Clayton, our family became so small that even Aunt Pallas was lonesome and wanted the children back again, even if the work was harder on her. The older ones had married and settled in different places, and only the two youngest of my half brothers remained at home with my mother and her three children. My half sister, Rilia, had married a man from Boston, who located in Raleigh, where he was engaged in the manufacture of spurs, bridles, bits, etc., for the Confederate army. Rilia

whom I loved as my own, was the sweetest and best sister a girl ever had. She was unselfish to a fault, besides being the "funny" one in the family. Her talent for mimicry was worthy of cultivation. If I was cross or irritable, she knew how to put me in a good humor "by taking me off" as she expressed it. She had no marks of beauty for she never lost the Hinton likeness. Her droll and almost comical expression gave her face a pleasant look and while I used to sit and admire Nealie on account of her beauty, I would sit fascinated by Rilia's drollery. Oh how I loved them both, but for very different reasons, and when Rilia married I was as lonesome for her as when Nealie became the happy bride of her soldier sweetheart.

Angel of charity, who, from above,
Comest to dwell a pilgrim here;
Thy voice is music, thy smile is love,
And pity's soul is in thy tear.
When on the shrine of God were laid
First fruits of all most good and fair,
That ever bloomed in Eden's shade,
Thine was the holiest offering there.

—THOMAS MOORE.

Some murmur, when their sky is clear
And wholly bright to view,
If one small speck of dark appear
In their great heaven of blue.
And some with thankful love are filled,
If but one streak of light,
One ray of God's good mercy gild
The darkness of their night.

—ARCHBISHOP TRENCH.

CHAPTER X.

HOW THE SHERIFF SWINDLED MY MOTHER.

The year following my father's death was fraught with much trouble for my poor mother. There were some irregularities in his will, and the war having taken away almost all the men of the town, left her in dire need of legal advice, but the fact that she had no money to spend without getting value received caused the farm of "White Oaks" to be lost to the family. There were three hundred acres of land that had become valuable for cotton raising, that passed out of the family for want of some one to advise my mother.

It seems that father, in the kindness of his heart, had stood security for a friend, and as almost always happens, he was the one to pay. This land was to be sold to pay his "just debts." The law required the sheriff to advertise it in three conspicuous places in the county, the Court House, the cross-roads, and the town. The sheriff was a man who was anxious to "get rich quick," and taking advantage of the absence of legal talent and my mother's ignorance of such things, did not post the notice as required by law, for no one ever saw it if he did.

While the great battle of Bull Run was being

planned and fought this officer of the law went to "White Oaks," put up the land for sale and had his son buy it for himself. When my mother learned of this it was too late, and she was afraid to take her good money to recover the farm, and fearing the loss of all, gave it up entirely.

The mercantile business and its good-will were sold for a song, because of the scarcity of men to run it, and consequently that was sacrificed too.

The stock, the home and contents were also sold at auction. My mother had so much sentiment, she bought all the chickens and cows; and "Gofar," our family horse, was put up for sale too, and last of all Aunt Pallas.

There were few mean enough to bid against a widow who would have a hard struggle to support her three little children. How I dreaded to see Aunt Pallas ordered on the block. I held on to her, dear, faithful soul, till the auctioneer began his cries. He told what a trustworthy servant she was, and her good points he dwelt on, until I feared for her being left to us, and then he began "How much is bid for Pallas?" There was a dead silence, for ages, it seemed to me, when we children all weeping together heard my mother's voice filled with sobs, answer "Five hundred dollars," then again the auctioneer cried "Five hundred dollars is too cheap for Pallas, a good cook, a good nurse, a cornfield hand, a seamstress, a good weaver, and there is not much of anything that she cannot do. How much is bid for Pallas?" A silence of a few seconds, but years it seemed to us; no one

raised a voice, and the auctioneer continued "Five hundred, going! going! gone! to Mrs. Lee." How we all wept for joy and I hugged her neck so tight I nearly choked her when she stepped off the block. Of course "Gofar" was such a pet we could not bear to let him go, and by the time the sale was over my poor mother had bought about six thousand dollars' worth, including the different lots around town that father had owned.

Her surprise was great at her boldness in buying all these things at such a time as the South was beginning to experience. At supper that night, when she was telling of this amount that seemed like a large fortune to her, she exclaimed, "How in the world will I ever manage to pay the four thousand dollars?" (She still had managed to keep the two thousand that she had before her marriage.) "The Lawd will help you Miss Candace, 'cause you were shore trying to do your duty." "Well I know what I am going to try to do, go to Raleigh and get sewing for the soldiers from the Commissary Department, they are paying good prices I hear, and there is plenty of work to be had. I shall go tomorrow and see what may be done about it."

"There, mother, I knew you would pay for Aunt and Gofar" I cried.

"My child, you have yet to learn there is a great deal of difference between talking and paying, 'talk is cheap,' but it takes money to pay debts." The next day Bob was ordered to hitch "Gofar" to the buggy and drive my mother to the "City of Oaks." An old man, Alvin Johnson, was helping put the harness on

the horse, I was sitting in the buggy watching the old man adjust the parts when he suddenly called out, "Bob you hold his head while I thread his tail."

They drove to Raleigh, about fifteen miles distant. My mother gave the credentials necessary and was given one hundred soldiers' jackets to make for our soldiers. She and Nealie began sewing on them the next day, and so they continued to do through the four long years of the war.

Once when Nealie had been up to Raleigh to get some more work from the Commissary Department, she came to the station to return home she found an uncle of ours on the train. He had been to the hospital at Weldon to see his son who had been wounded. Uncle was sick himself all the way home, and Nealie sat by him and tried to cheer him. On reaching home, the next morning, he said, "Candace, let Bob take me home in the buggy, I am so sick I can't walk."

My mother replied, "Yes, you have a hot fever." So he was sent home, and after reaching there a physician was called and found him breaking out with the small-pox. Bob drove frantically back home, and when he told my mother and Nealie they nearly fainted, especially poor little Nealie, thinking that perhaps her beautiful face might be marked forever by that dreadful disease. We heard nothing but small-pox (that we should all be sure to catch it), from morning till night. No wonder it made such a deep impression on my sister's subconsciousness. My mother, so anxious, sent for Dr. Robertson, an army physician, to

tell her if there was a preventive. "No, Mrs. Lee," said he, "there is not. Think no more about it, Miss Cornelia, but at the first indication of indisposition on her part, call me; I shall stay in Clayton for some time before returning to Goldsboro."

Still it was hard to keep from talking about what might happen; we each prayed hard that she might escape that, the time was about expired and my mother and sister were beginning to look more hopeful, when one Saturday night, just two weeks since Nealie had been with Uncle, when we all sat around the fire in mother's room and she was telling us some of the incidents of her own life, I saw my mother look startled and said, "Cornelia, what is the matter?"

"I feel sick, mother, like I had a chill." Mother grasped Bob and me, and running to the kitchen with us, said, "Pallas, my child has the small-pox, take care of these babies for I don't know when I shall ever see them again; maybe never, and clasping us to her heart, with "God bless you," ran back to my sister. Finding her growing worse, she ran for the doctor, who said, "The symptoms are much like the small-pox, but don't give up yet, it may be a cold and will soon pass off."

From that night until the thirteenth her symptoms were greatly like it. We (Bob and I) were never allowed near the house. Aunt Pallas cooked the food, and carried it to the door, and there left it. My mother would come daily to the window and call to us to be good and pray for Nealie, who was raging with fever and pain in her head. We were all in

quarantine. Nobody came nearer than the gate, except the Doctor. After two weeks, and she still raved with fever and pain in her head, Dr. Robertson called in another consulting physician. They decided that it was not small-pox, but brain fever. Still with grateful hearts to God that she did not have small-pox, we were told it was more dangerous still, and that her life hung by a thread. For days she lay unconscious and still raving in delirium; but one morning in the third week she awoke in her right mind, and after a long while she was able to be up, and gradually grew strong and well again.



Haste not! rest not! calmly wait;
Meekly bear the storms of fate!
Duty be thy polar guide;—
Do the right whate'er betide!
Haste not! rest not! conflicts part
God shall crown thy work at last.

J. W. DE GOETHE.

CHAPTER XI.

THE WORK WE ALL DID DURING THE WAR.

My poor mother, at intervals, would stop sewing to help weave the cloth for our clothes, Aunt Pallas usually finding time to spin the cotton. My task was given me every day after school, either to make a pair of linings for the sleeves of the soldiers' jackets or go to the kitchen and help Aunt Pallas spin the cotton yarn.

Often at school the other children would feign sickness and stay at home. I tried it only two or three times, for as soon as I reached home and my mother asked me a few questions, she said, "go out and help Aunt spin some yarn for your stockings." I hated that above all the other kinds of work, though Aunt Pallas said, "It'll make you graceful, Betsey, hold you' head laik 'big bugs' ought to."

The next day found me bright and early at school, and the more willing student I became from the few times I tried to stay at home. Weaving was too hard for me, for my legs were not long enough to reach the treadles, but I would watch my mother making pretty plaid goods for my dresses, the pink dyes were made from poke berries, and the blues were dyed with indigo. How I used to like to help with the dyeing.

I didn't care for other colors enough to know from what my mother made them.

There never was such a busy woman as she was, and wanted us to be busy too, from one duty to another. I had so many yards of cotton yarn measured off for me and had a certain time to knit it into stockings for myself. The time came when every Southern woman wanted to show her loyalty to the Southern cause by wearing everything home made, and store goods were tabooed as something entirely unnecessary.

The millinery was one of the most difficult things to make. Finally one of our girls discovered that the husks of corn made beautiful straw hats after being soaked in water and bleached white or dyed the color preferred. It was plaited and sewed together, then bent in shapes to suit the wearer, and odds and ends would be used to trim them with; home-made flowers. Wire grass and palmetto were also woven and plaited into pretty designs, and made up nicely, though cow horns scraped into white shavings, and sewed on a pasteboard crown, with black velvet brim, made the prettiest turbans. I used to enjoy the time for making our hats, for my mother wanted us as well dressed as our neighbors, and always found time to make our clothes in the fashion; but the day that Nealie wore a homespun of blue grey, with a long Chesterfield coat, every seam in the long wrap corded with dark blue, with a cow's horn turban, a snowy white with blue velvet brim, and a bunch of red roses on the side, nobody who saw her would have thought that every

thread she wore had been spun, woven and made at our home, except the old velvet for the brim.

Aunt Pallas used to make our substitute for coffee; at first she roasted corn meal, a thing we could not bear to drink, then sweet potatoes cut in dice shape and roasted, which was an improvement, but when she tried roasted rye, we found it the next best thing to genuine coffee.

Working from early morn till sundown, for she never would do anything but knitting at night, my mother paid all her indebtedness long before the war ended. Having paid her two thousand dollars on the debt, she continued to pay quarterly as much as she could earn and spare from her living. When the war ended she had several thousand dollars of Confederate money, utterly worthless, but as she had paid four thousand dollars indebtedness by means of this same money, so worthless later on, we could not help but see how much my mother had accomplished with it.

Bring the good old bugle, boys! we'll sing another song—
Sing it with a spirit that will start the world along—
Sing it as we used to sing it, fifty thousand strong,
While we were marching thro' Georgia.

Hurrah! hurrah! we bring the jubilee!
Hurrah! hurrah! the flag that makes you free!
So we sang the chorus from Atlanta to the sea,
While we were marching thro' Georgia.

—HENRY C. WORK.

CHAPTER XII.

SHERMAN'S MARCH TO RALEIGH, NORTH CAROLINA.

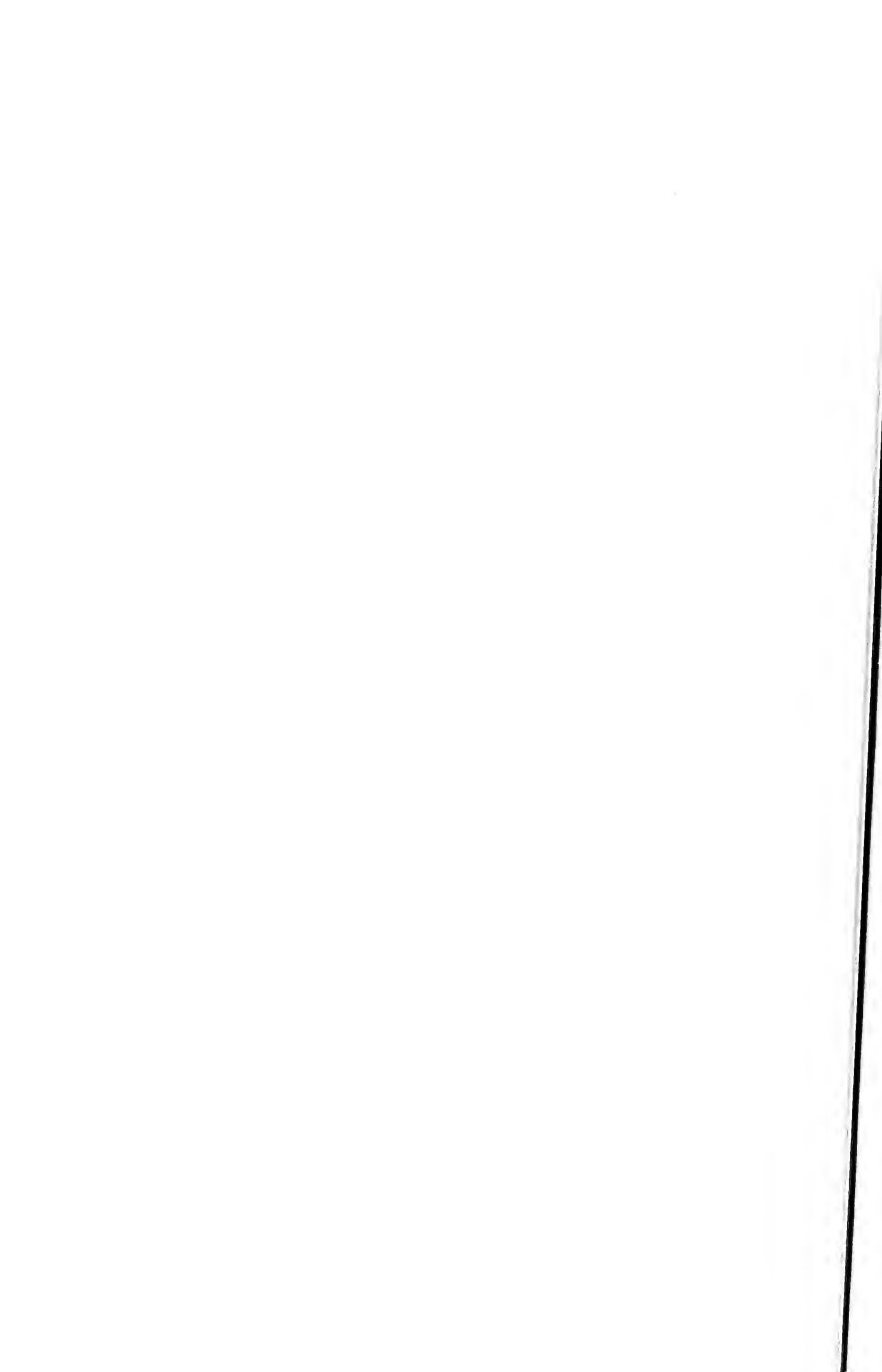
The next great epoch in my life was "Sherman's march through Georgia," continued into North Carolina. We were told every day that he would be there in a day or two, the days became weeks, and he did not come; everything was waiting for his coming, for we knew it was inevitable, and then began the hiding of everything of any value, but the children and negroes were kept in ignorance as to the whereabouts of the hidden effects. I am certain my mother and her neighbors would hide the things one night and take them up the next to find a safer place. But her real anxiety was for her girls. Many things like silver plate had been dropped in the well or buried beneath the floor of the horses' stalls. A trunk containing clothing, my mother's wedding dress, especially to be prized, was buried in a pine thicket, a mile or two away from town. Even faithful Aunt Pallas was not told where the things were hidden, lest through fear or threats she turn traitor at the last minute and tell the Yankees the hiding place. Our soldiers had well nigh depleted our county of everything to eat, and it was getting to be the daily wish that the "Yankees would come through," as Aunt

Pallas would say. The battle of Averysboro was a vivid reminder to us all of what poor Walter had written about the battle of Spottsylvania Court House, Virginia. All day long we could hear the booming of cannon, which meant death to so many poor fellows.

This battle was fought between Gen. Slocum's army and General Joe Johnston's, one of our Commanders. The confederates, however, were forced to fly, and when they passed our town they were in a mighty big hurry to get away from General Slocum. They tore down fences, railroads, etc., and when the ragged, half starved fellows passed our house, they left orders for all the women and children to get between the chimneys. My mother and sister had been on the porch, waving a last farewell to the poor defeated Confederates who had held out so wonderfully during those days of suffering. They called to them if they heard any skirmishing to be sure and seek a place of safety, for Sherman would reach Clayton by eleven o'clock that morning. I was greatly disturbed on going to my room to find all my frocks hanging in the closets, after begging mother to hide them as Bettie Cox's mother had done her things. I wondered where I could find a safe place, and failing concluded to wear them all. I managed to put on four with a large new homespun for the top dress. Then I went into the dining room and in the drawer where the steel knives and forks were I found a plated fork; thinking it safer too on my person, I tried to find a place about me where I could hide it, but could think of no safe place, only in my stocking, so placing it with the



“General Sherman halted and asked in a kindly voice whether she had husband or sons in the war.”



prongs turned out, I thought no more about it till later in the day. After a while my mother bade us get indoors between the chimneys as ordered, for now and then a stray minie ball came whizzing through the trees. Then came the rear guard of Johnston's army, and half starved as they were, they still shouted "Hurrah for Jeff Davis" and "We'll hang Abe Lincoln to a sour apple tree." With a wave of their tattered old hats the last of our brave boys passed our house on their way to Raleigh. While the women and children of our little town were left to the mercy of the enemy and Gen. William Tecumseh Sherman. Such horrible stories my mother had heard of what might happen to her daughters gave her so much real pain, that when the last of our boys had gone forever, her features, looked determined like they did when she had a difficult task to do and intended to do it. Such a look came over her face as a bugle blast was heard and then burst upon our vision Sherman's army. Our soldiers had passed ragged, barefooted; words beggar the description of their real condition. Here coming, from every direction, were men in beautiful blue and new looking uniforms, and everything seemed to stand out as silhouettes against the bright April sun, and there mounted on his favorite charger, was Gen. William Tecumseh Sherman, gorgeous in gold and blue; then came the guard that he ordered sent to protect us, and such a sea of faces that we could not look in any direction that the Yankees were not, and soon the porch was filled with them asking if there were any "Johnny Rebs" inside. I chanced to follow the guard to see what he intended doing, when he re-

marked, "Say, Betty (for I had told him my name as soon as I saw him), why are you so warm?" He was out digging up some buried treasures, I said: "Well, I have on five frocks, Mr. Bunting, and they make me very warm, for one of them is woolen." He replied "will you tell me what you are wearing all those dresses for on such a warm day?" I answered, "Why, to keep the Yankees from getting them." "Oh I see, well, let me tell you, as long as General Sherman sent me here to guard your mother's house and effects, I will see that the Yankees don't get your dresses. Go, child, and take them off." I lifted my homespun skirt to show him that I really did have on five dresses, when he caught sight of something sticking out of my stocking.

"Well, please tell me what that is in your stocking that sticks out like knitting needles?"

"That's my fork I have been eating with since the others were hid. I didn't want the Yankees to get anything I had, for I believe my mother forgot to hide these things."

I left him and went into the kitchen and in a few minutes a Yankee came in holding a tin cup in his hand. My mother had just stepped in to speak to Aunt about preparing supper when the Yankee spoke, saying in a very rough way, "What in the h--- is this?" Poor mother looked so surprised, and said, "Why how should I know?" "Well, you have got to tell us." By that time several others came up. "I can't tell you what I don't know," she replied. "Yes, but you do know, and by gosh you've got to tell us," he hissed out. "You've got to drink some of your poison you

fixed for us." My mother began to tremble and said "What do you want me to take the poison for, I have never harmed you?" "Well you are trying to poison us, aren't you? Come now, drink hearty." Mother began to shake as he kept holding out the cup; she took it and said, "tell me where you got it." "Out of this jug, we found it in there," he said, pointing to Aunt's room. "Oh if you got it from that place I will tell you that it is French brandy," she answered. "Oh, no, no, it is not the right color, though it smells like it, you have put some poison in it, if it is," said he, "and now you shall drink some of it." Mother, so helpless, stood there, and holding the cup in her hand asked, "have you put anything in it to poison me, I don't object to tasting it if you have not tampered with it." "Not on your life would we put poison in anything that smells as good as this, though it does look queer."

"Well," said my mother, "if you haven't put anything in it, I will taste it," for the jug it was in had only held sorghum, so suiting the action to the word she put the cup to her lips, just as the guard made his appearance and ran them away. He scolded mother and told her never to have any words with them again, but to call him and he would settle everything.

General Sherman camped near our house that night, and early next morning he was on his way to Raleigh, but not before he left a warm spot in the hearts of one Southern family named Lee. God bless him!

"Two knights in armor who fought unto the death of each, because of their reading differently the inscription of a shield. Each was right, but they read the two different sides of the shield."

What different lots our stars accord;
This babe to be hailed and wooed as a Lord,
And that to be shunned like a leper;
One, to the world's wine, honey and corn,
Another, like Colchester native, born
To its vinegar only, and pepper.

THOMAS HOOD.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE "BUMMERS" AND "RED STRINGS."

After Sherman's main army reached Raleigh, "the bummers," as they were called, followed in a few days. These were the men who pillaged and caused much annoyance to the neighborhood, by sometimes committing crimes. They visited our town in pairs, and each home of any pretensions. They evidently thought the people had had time to dig up their treasures, therefore it would be easy to find many valuables, which they did. They searched our house thoroughly, even the boxes in my playhouse they ransacked. I shall never forget how we, Nealie and I, kept hiding from room to room, as these brutes would go into another.

After leaving the town they stopped and raided the home of Mr. Urias Baucom, a former slave owner and stock raiser. He had made a great deal of money in the business, and had managed to convert it into gold. It was an open secret that he had buried his treasure. These "bummers" had been told the story by some of the negro slaves that he had formerly owned. Going to his home they demanded his gold; he told them they could not get it, that he had worked hard for it and would not give it up. Whereupon

they seized and tied him hand and foot; then putting a gag in his mouth, he was left to reconsider. After searching in vain they returned to demand a second time the hiding place of his gold. He still declared he would never tell them; then binding him again, they took him to a tree and tied him up by his thumbs. His wife, who was cooking and knew nothing of what was going on, hearing groans, ran frantically out, beseeching them to let her husband go free. They demanded of her if she knew where the gold was hidden, and she told them "yes," whereupon Mr. Baucom begged her not to tell, saying he'd as soon die as to lose his hard earned money in his old age.

Some of "the bunners" went with her, where they found a few old socks filled with silver and a little gold, but she must have found enough to satisfy the wretches for they cut the rope and Mr. Baucom was a free man, but not many dollars of his hard earned gold had they found, for he well knew his wife would give away the secret if his life was in jeopardy, and he only told her of a small amount.

He had dug up the county road in front of his house, and taking his canvas bags of gold had deposited them there in the night time, then filled the hole with stone and gravel as if the road had never been touched. This he did weeks before, and Sherman and his whole army marched over more than fifty thousand dollars of buried treasure in gold on the county road to Raleigh.

The years eighteen sixty-five to sixty-nine were spent by the South in recovering from the effects of

the war. The state of North Carolina was among the first to recover, and our little town was not slower than the others to show marked signs of improvement.

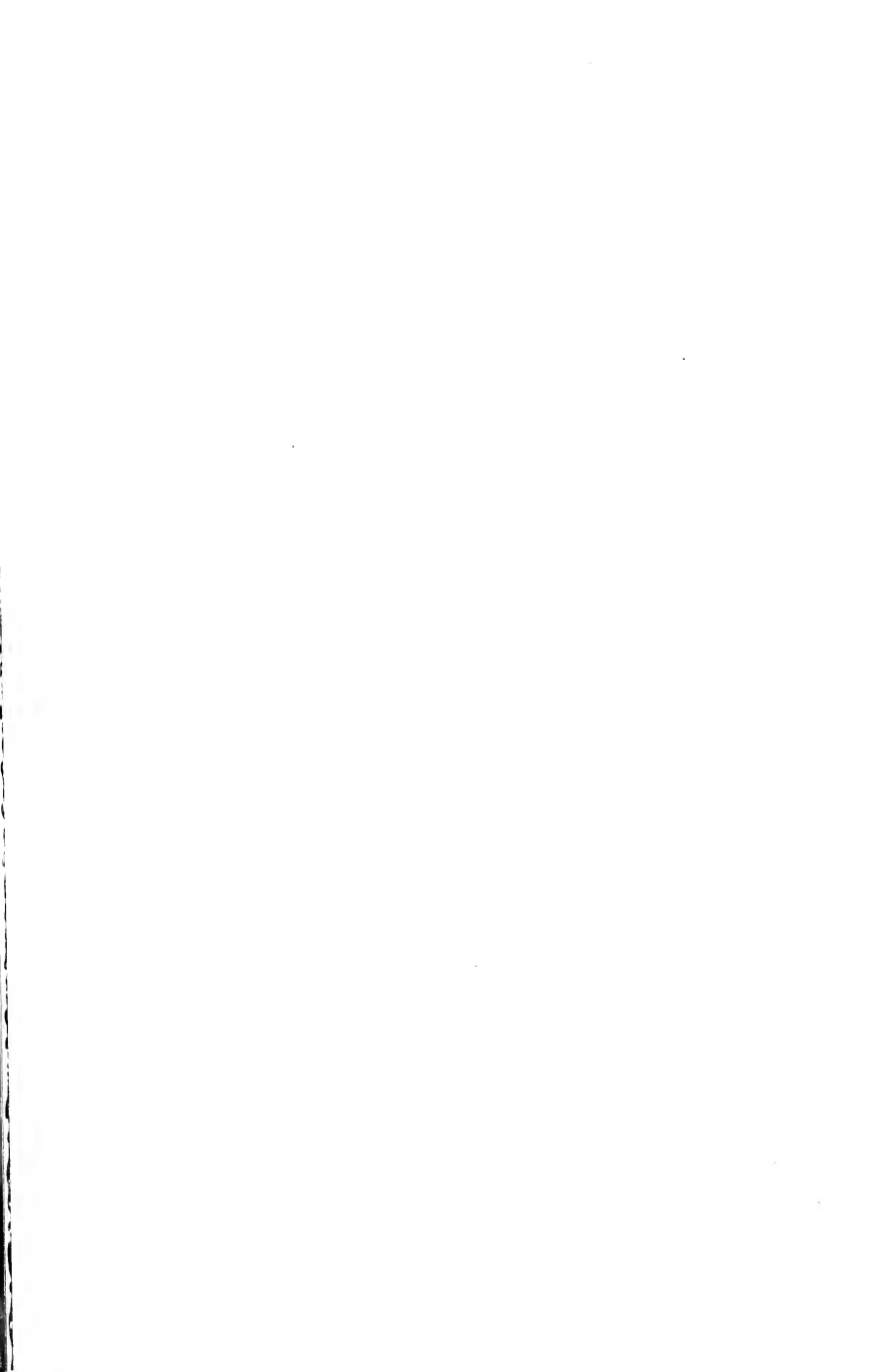
My mother's little family, then not so burdensome, consisted of Nealie, Bob and myself, the other children having married and settled off in different parts of the state. Bob, who returned soon after the surrender from the swamps, near Fayetteville, where he had taken our "Gofar" with a buggy load of things to keep the Yankees from taking them, was then large enough with Aunt Pallas help to cultivate the small parcels of land, and we were able to hold our own with any of our neighbors.

During these days many things happened "to try men's souls," among them was the formation of a society called the "Red Strings," that even afforded some amusing incidents, one at least I will recall.

One day Aunt Pallas came in and said, "laws a masey, I wish Miss Candace you and the chillun could see dem 'Red things' a trying to drill, he! he! he!" Here she laughed so immoderately that we could not help but join her, though not knowing what she was laughing at. She suddenly stopped and burst out again, "laws, dem crazy niggahs would surely make a doag laugh, he! he! he!" Bob could wait no longer, and cried out, "shut up Aunt and tell us what you mean by 'Red Strings.'" "Why, don't you know, honey, dat Mr. Roby has been around invitin' all de niggahs to meet at Roxboro, men and women, too, mind what I'm tellin' ye, to jine some sort of a sassiety, dat we colored people are 'quested to be membahs of, he! he!

he! what is going to make a 'provement on us.' I just says 'yes sah, Mr. Roby, I heahs what you say, but I'm too old to go and jine any sassiety now.' Still chillun, I was mos' a dyin' with scuroosity to see what dey was a doin', anyhow, an I went along down to Liza's house, and saw all de free niggahs in de county a marchin'. De drum was a beatin' and de fife a tootin' and den Mr. Roby said 'fall in' and shore nuff, they started two and two togedder a sayin' 'hep, hep, hep.' Bimeby Mr. Roby said 'forward march,' and I'll be seized by cats if all dem niggahs didn't start in to try to drill, he! he! he! sorta laik soldiers. Shore thing he kept dem niggahs steppin' laik a chicken on a hot griddle for a while, den he up and says 'close up,' and would you believe it chillun, every last niggah man and woman in dat company—he! he! he!—began to pull up dere close, shore nuff. I surtingly did nearly splode with laffin at 'em." At this we all joined in.

"I better be keerful too how I goes a laffin' at folks 'cause I may get that pain again. Oh, bless de Lawd how me old back do ache."



Then the fuff and the dthragoons
In squadthrons and platoons,
With their music playing chimes down upon us bore;
And they bate the rattatoo,
And ended the shalvo on the Shannon shore.

—WILHEIM MAKELIME THACKERY.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE "KU KLUX KLAN."

About the time the "Ku Klux Klan" made their appearance, I remember one morning at the breakfast table Aunt Pallas came in with a plate of hot biscuits, her eyes bulging and her whole frame shaking, "Miss Candace, I suttinly saw 'ghostes' or 'hants' last night."

"Now, Pallas, what do you mean by such talk?" Though noting her agitation my mother repeated, "What is the matter?"

"I shore saw 'ghostes' last night. Brother Dannyell had been to see me and we kept a settin' talkin' till I thought I heard a chicken crowin' fer day. We was a talkin' about Mars Charles and de good old days, when Bro. Dannyell 'lowed he'd be gwine along home. I jest walked to the front gate wid him, when dere riz up afore us a whole passell of 'ghostes' and 'hants,' a ridin' laik dey was on hoss back. Hit's de truth—I declare pint blank. Dey was so tall, chillun, dey jest riz plum up to de sky and laik a skeleton wid a fire a burning in its head, and it was all wrapped in something like white sheets, reachin' clear to the ground. I jest raised my voice and said 'Praise de Lawd, Brother Dannyell, dis ole niggah's time have come,'

when a voice from the grave laik said, 'What are you a doin' up till dis time of night Pallas Lee, talkin' to dat man?' Folkses I'm tellin nuffin but the truf, my ole knees wuz a shakin' and I jes drapped down and begun to pray. Laws a massey Mars Jesus, forgive me for being up talkin' to my poor old brudder Dannyell till dis time o' night and I'll promise Mr. Ghostes' or 'hants' nevah to do so no more."

"Now Pallas," dat voice repeated again, "are you shore dat man is your brudder, or is ye jes tellin' me lies? Be keerful Pallas Lee what ye tells me" dat same voice 'sclaimed.

"Chilluns, ye orter heard me pleadin' for me life."

"Yes, Master Ghosts, I am shore tellin' ye de gospel truf. I neveh 'lows no niggahs roun heah but my ole brudder Dannyell, an Aunt Liza, cause I don't laik to disturb my Missus and dem chillun what I loves so much, besides Mister Ghost all dese niggahs round heah b'long to de 'Red String Sassiety.'

"Very well, Pallas Lee, go to your bed and you Dannyell go to your home, but 'member tomorrow to tell all your 'Red String' friends to look out, for de Klu Klux are out riding dis county up and down to catch niggahs dat are in mischief." "I ain't nevah heard tell of no such name before as 'Klu Klux.' Yaas Ma'am, day say dat to me—as sartin' as I am a standin' heah."

"Pallas, I am sure you dreamed that, for it sounds just like your ghost stories and you know I don't want these children to hear such foolishness. Of course they know you tell them like fairy tales and so they don't believe you are telling the truth."

"Miss Candace, I hope I may drap stone dead if I ain't tellin' ye de truf, laws, de goose bumps jes nascherally raise on me to even think about it now," declared Aunt in the most solemn tones.

My mother not wishing to hear more about such monstrous dreams, ordered her to say no more about it. Later in the day one of the neighbors dropped in and told us even a more marvelous tale.

This lady whose husband, I suppose was a member of the Ku Klux Klan, told of a company of grotesque figures that had been seen the night before, mounted on horseback, appearing like the heads of skeletons illuminated, their grinning teeth and horrible looking sockets glittering with lights shining out from a white robe that enveloped both horse and rider. She related further that a negro, who had made threats against some of the white people had been found, killed and quartered and hung from Neuse river bridge, with a notice of warning to the other negroes and "Red Stringers."

However, that cured our county of such lawlessness with the exception of one more horrible case, so that the Society of Red Strings disbanded and never drilled again.

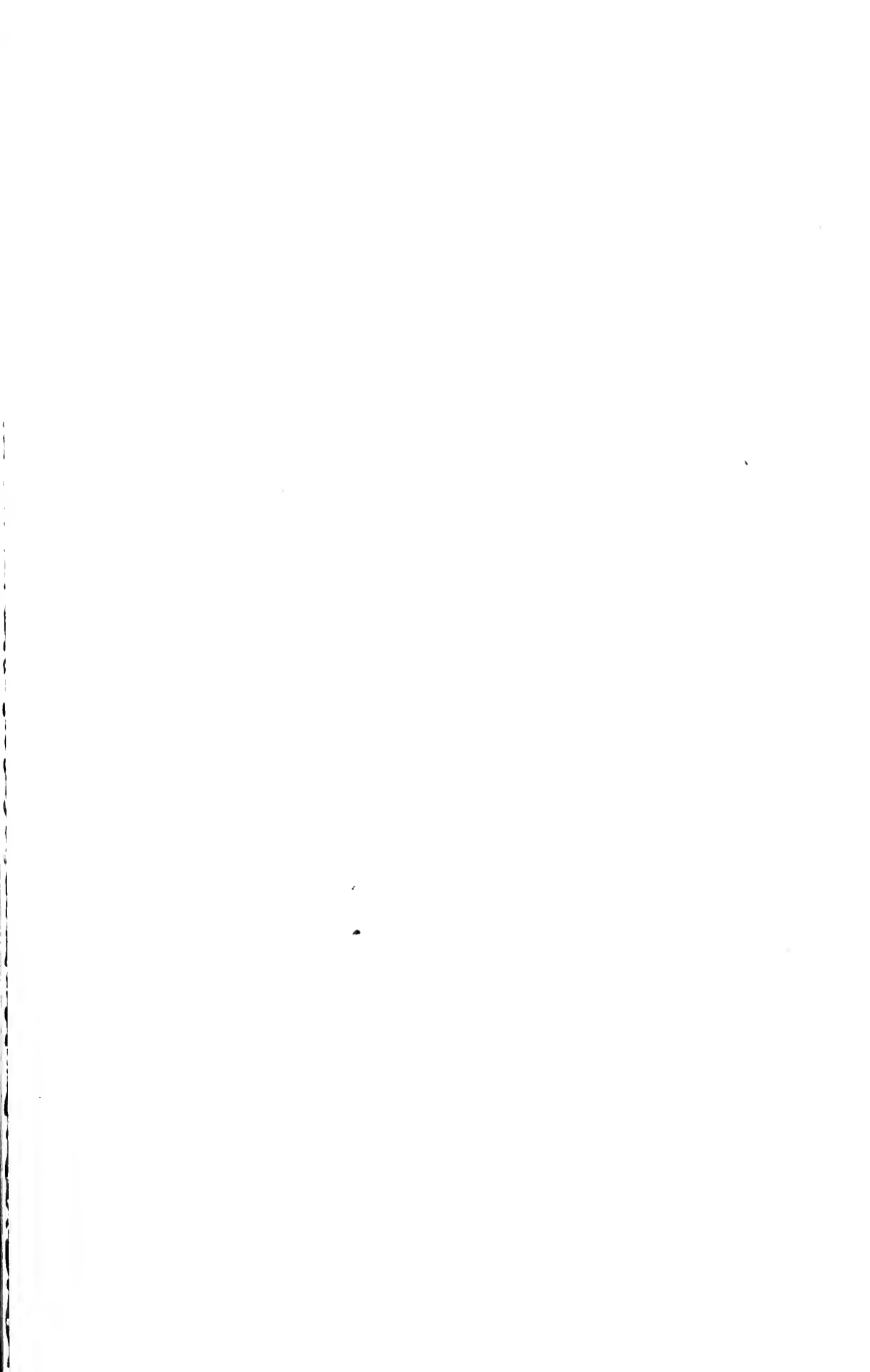
The other case I recall was one of the most horrible crimes that came to my knowledge during those days and as a little child it made such a deep impression, I can still see a good reason, why the "Ku Klux Klan" was organized.

My mother and sister Nealie were invited to spend a few days in the country. Shortly after reaching

Mrs. Gardner's home a messenger on horseback dashed up and told them an assault and murder had been committed by a young negro fellow on Kitty Austin, the sixteen year old daughter of her nearest neighbor. These women wasted no time in reaching the scene and the Coroner was requested to hold an inquest on the body. The few soldiers that were left to the South had not yet returned to their homes, so the Coroner ordered a jury of women for the preliminary trial. Twelve representative women were selected as jurors—my mother and her friends among them. Mother was chosen as forewoman when the trial came off. They proved this negro was found sitting on a fence with a knife covered with blood in his hand and eating an apple. The body of the girl only a few feet distant in the orchard where she had been sent by her mother to gather fruit for dinner was lying with her throat cut from ear to ear.

These women jurors found the negro guilty of assault and murder and he was ordered sent to the county jail there to await final trial, but the Court records have never shown that such a trial was held, for it was whispered that the lynch law took him in hand and the sheriff was never permitted to reach the jail with the prisoner or else the Ku Klux Klan summarily disposed of him.

That horrible crime was committed on the day after President Lincoln had been assassinated, April 15th, by John Wilkes Booth. But in our town and county there were more tears shed that day for Kitty Austin than for the martyred President.



Such was he, our Martyr-Chief,
Whom late the nation he had led,
With ashes on her head,
Wept with the passion of an angry grief;
Forgive me, if from present things I turn
To speak what in my heart will burn,
And hang my wreath on his world honored urn.
Nature they say doth dote
And cannot make a man
Save on some worn-out plan,
Repeating as by rote:
For him her Old World moulds aside she threw,
And choosing sweet clay from the breast
Of the unexhausted West,
With stuff untainted shaped a hero new,
Wise, steadfast in the strength of God and true.

—JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL.

CHAPTER XV.

HOW I FIRST MET "UNCLE NED."

The close of the Civil War left in its wake a trail of poverty and great suffering throughout the fair Southland. When peace was declared hunger still stalked abroad in the land and side by side with hunger walked pride, and together they knocked at the door of the once wealthy planter as well as at the door of the poor tenant. There was little money in circulation at this time and few ways open to earn any. Poverty reigned king and was a cruel tyrant to his subjects, and they were legion.

Three months after the surrender of General Robert E. Lee, my mother and her three children were in about as needy circumstances as one would care to be, though our neighbors were, many of them, much worse off than we. Such being the case it was more than difficult to supply our necessities, for the avenues open to a woman struggling to make a living in the village where we lived were only such as teaching and sewing. The girls in almost every home had been taught to sew, that is, to embroider and do fancy work, but there was no demand for such work then, and consequently nothing could be done in that line. However, "where there's a will there's a way," and

when our soldiers came back home, to find themselves without clothes except the uniform of gray, often tattered and torn to rags though always dearly beloved, my mother bethought herself of a plan to make a little money for herself and to help the poor soldiers. She decided to make coats, vests and trousers for them and as they had no money to pay her then, to wait until the crops were harvested and take such produce as her little family could use in the meantime. This meant waiting a long time, for few soldiers could even get a start that year.

My sister, the oldest of the children, at that time was about sixteen, and still continued to help mother with the sewing. The work was slow coming in and very slow going out. Each garment was a lesson in tailored work for mother and sister to learn on, but the prices charged were so small that it was little more than starvation wages they were working so hard to make. It took them fully two weeks to make a suit of clothes, so it needs must take a long time to do more than keep the cruel despot, hunger, from entering ruthlessly into this little household. We, children, were not looking for dress or luxuries; indeed, we were daily impressed by the fact that our mother was doing all she could do for us and we were satisfied. Many and many times have we seen her sit and weep because we did not have the things she wanted us to have but could not afford to get for us, but we never dared complain at our lot, because mother always felt so keenly our poverty,—besides, we were better off than many of our neighbors, for our garden



"Uncle Ned."



and fruit trees were in a flourishing condition and we had plenty fruit and vegetables and some to spare. Meat, however, was a scarce commodity and one that our soldiers had relieved us of, for, what General Wheeler's cavalry left, General Johnston's men finished up, as no one around our village could resist the appeal of a hungry Confederate soldier, and our meat was eaten up by them months before the Yankee army came through our town. A piece of meat was such a rarity that it was either given to us in small portions or else it was cooked the second time with vegetables to give them a seasoning. I never liked it and only ate it because mother said "children always looked putty-colored when they never ate meat." Not wanting to look putty-colored, I ate it. I had a sweet tooth, though, and loved candy and sugar and the many good things made with sugar; but, alas, candy was clear out of reach and the money to buy it was hopelessly beyond our power of obtaining, so patience was instilled daily into our lives and "learn to labor and to wait" was a proverb in our home. I was, however, permitted to attend school, while my poor mother and sister made the Professor more suits of clothes to pay my tuition, than I perhaps deserved. Still, I did try to learn and managed to stand at the head of my classes most of the time.

This was in June, in that memorable year 1865. The Government had sent Yankee soldiers to the village to rebuild the railroad and telegraph office that our soldiers had destroyed. One day, on my way from school, I saw a neighbor's boy, Sandy Hanff, selling

vegetables and fruit to these men. They were living in tents and as I passed I thought to myself, "we have plenty fruit and I could sell some things too, like Sandy, even if I am a girl." I felt sure we needed the money as much as Sandy did. Without saying anything to my mother about it, for I felt intuitively that she was too proud to permit me to do it, I went home, found a white split oak basket, and putting some green leaves around the sides I filled the basket with a gallon or more delicious yellow plums. Without a word I went back to the tent where the boy had sold his things and as I drew near the door I was seized with mingled feelings of shame and regret,—shame, to meet a Yankee soldier and tell him I needed money, and regret that I had not told my mother; so, I ran back again, my heart having failed me entirely, and stopping, I remembered that to go back meant failure and no sugar, no meat, which fact bothered me very little as I said, but my mother a great deal. Finally I braced up as I ventured near the tent, but hearing footsteps again inside I made a sudden dash for liberty and home. But again I stopped stock still. By this time my poor little arms were beginning to ache from the weigh of the basket filled with plums and I began to think myself a coward, and remembering about the sugar and the nice candy it would make, I resolved to go back and sell my plums. Besides, now I came to think of it, didn't my dearest friend, Bettie Cox, have a pretty dress and shoes that had been made from goods her father bought from the blockade runners, while I had noth-

ing but homespun frocks, or old store dresses of my sister's, remade for myself. Remembering this, I said, "Bettie Lee, don't be a coward, because you never can wear store shoes and pink gingham dresses if you don't *try again*." I smoothed my apron and homespun frock and looked to see if my shoes were tied—they were home-made too, and the natural color of the leather before it is dressed, quite fashionable now, but to me at that time they were a source of grief, because of their homely look both in color and in make. I wanted black morocco shoes: now I had a hope of getting them, so I ran in again and before I could turn back I found myself face to face with a manly form, wearing a Yankee uniform. Seeing my embarrassment, he relieved me of my shyness by speaking first and said, "Hello, Sissy, what can I do for you?" "Will you buy some plums, please sir? I want to get some sugar, a pink gingham frock and morocco shoes and, and—." Goodness knows when I should have left off my long list of wants, only for the comical expression I saw on his face, and he changed the subject by asking my name and where I lived. I told him my name was "Bettie Lee and that I lived in the two-story white house on Main street and the county road."

"Why, you have a good old rebel name, Bettie. Are you related to the great General Robert E. Lee?"

"Yes, sir, I am, and my brother is named Robert for him," I answered with pardonable pride.

"Well, why didn't he come to sell the fruit instead of you?"

"Because he carried our horse and buggy with a load of things to hide them from the Yankees and he never came back again."

"Did the Yankees take much from your people?"

"Everything they could lay their hands on," I said, "except what was hidden and what the guard kept them from taking."

"Did you really have a guard and how did you get him?" he asked, not in curiosity, but seemed interested, I thought.

"Well, my mother heard a band playing 'Marching Through Georgia,' and went right out and asked General Sherman to send a guard to protect us. I was walking on tiptoe behind mother, holding on to her skirt, but she didn't know I was there, when I heard her ask an officer to have General Sherman pointed out to her; he granted her request and when General Sherman rode by, so fine in blue and gold, mother drew near and asked him with tears streaming down her cheeks to send her a guard to protect her little girls. He halted and asked in a kindly voice whether she had husband or sons in the war and she told him that my father died in December, '61, that one son was killed at "Seven Pines" and the other died a few weeks ago. Her youngest son, a boy of fourteen, had gone off with her horse and buggy with a party of old men who had never returned and she feared no word meant that he was dead. She began to weep again and that made me weep so loud that she turned and looked at me, greatly alarmed to see me standing with her at the head of Sherman's army and holding timidly to the

skirt of her homespun dress. 'Why, my child, what a dangerous thing for you to do. You might have been killed from a stray bullet from our men.' 'You might have been killed too, mother, and if you were I wanted to die too.' So that is the way we came to have a guard sent to us, and he did everything possible to save our things and lots of the things that were hidden he found and had them dug up and brought in to my mother. His name was Matthew Bunting, he told me and that he came from Ohio. We didn't think the Yankees would be a bit nice, but he was mighty nice, I thought."

I suddenly recalled the fact that I was talking to another Yankee and I must not let him think that any other except Mr. Matthew was worth talking to by a little Southern girl.

I stopped and began eating a large yellow plum. He spoke and asked what I charged for the plums. "I don't know, Mister, just what you think them worth."

"Here, Bettie, is a fifty cent shinplaster. Take that now, but try to bring me some vegetables, something green to eat, lettuce, onions, etc. We can find nothing for sale like that in this town. For us there is nothing but meat and bread in this blamed country."

"Why, nobody in town has any meat," I replied. "Where did you get it?" I ventured to ask, knowing how much mother wanted meat. "Well, it is shipped here from Baltimore for the men that work on the telegraph and railroad."

"I don't like meat at all, but I do like sugar and

candy made from sugar, and that's why I want to sell the fruit."

"Wait one minute, Bettie," said he, and going back into the tent he returned with two large pans, one filled with meat, bacon, and the other with loaf sugar. "Oh, how lovely," I said, inwardly smacking my lips at the sight of the sugar. "Oh, how lovely," but then remembering my mother, I became confused and said: "Oh, I am afraid my mother will be angry if I take these things." My friend evidently seeing how disturbed I was, said: "Well, Bettie, take them anyway, and if you won't accept them as a gift, bring me some lettuce or greens of some kind and your mother will surely not object to that." I thanked him and asked him, "Who shall I call for on my return?" "Just ask for *Uncle Ned*."

I started home feeling as happy as a little girl could who had sold fruit for such a big price and had prospects of doing a regular business. Suddenly, I felt a dread come over me that my mother would not approve of this thing that I had done and planned to do as long as the vegetables lasted. Something, I could not tell what, made my spirits sink quite low as I entered the gate at home and started up the walk. I had a choking sensation and tears unbidden began to well up in my eyes until I could hardly see. I stopped to brush them away and think what I should do. I wanted, now that the prospect seemed favorable, to sell enough truck to buy me a pink gingham frock. Such thoughts would never have entered my head, even the day before, with nothing in sight to buy with, but my visit to "Uncle Ned" had shown me how

I could make money enough to buy myself a dress and possibly a pair of black morocco shoes too. Putting everything in the background but hope, I marched as straight as I could go to my mother's room and in as brave a manner as I could summon up and without speaking a word, I placed the basket before her, the pan of meat, bacon, on one side, and the pan filled with sugar on the other. On top I had laid the dear little shinplaster that meant so much to me. I waited a moment to watch mother's face. She looked first at the basket, then at me. Then I managed to say: "Well, mother, guess?" Looking over her spectacles, a habit she had when she didn't like a thing very well, she said: "Bettie, tell me what in the world this is, and where did you get it?" "Taste it and see what it is." She did as I told her, unwittingly I am sure, and in a half dazed manner said: "Sugar, as I live, and bacon, and—and greenbacks. Why, child, what have you done?" A look of alarm came over her face and I could see that she was puzzling out the riddle, where I, a ten year old child, had found such treasures as she held on her lap. Without waiting longer I went up and put both arms around her neck and looking into her pretty blue eyes, I told the whole story of the plums and "Uncle Ned." When I mentioned his business of buying supplies for the men working on the telegraph and railroad my mother became quite excited and said: "Why, Bettie Lee, you must be out of your head to do such a thing as to sell our fruit to those awful Yankees working on the railroad. The very idea! Why didn't you give the plums to Doctor Ellington, our pastor? Oh, I am so humil-

iated I could almost die for shame." "Now, mother, Doctor Ellington has no money, no sugar and no meat either, for I heard Mrs. Ellington say they had none to even season the vegetables with, except on Sundays." "Never you mind what they do, you must carry these things back. I can't let you, a big girl of ten, go out selling fruit to those horrid Yankees." I began to cry as if my heart would break, whereat my sister Cornelia, seeing my distress and after hearing what an awful thing I had done, and seeing, no doubt, the sugar and bacon too, begged mother to let me keep the things, but be sure and send the greens to the old man as I had promised to do. Nealie always could make people do what she wanted. Something in her pretty face and sweet voice always won her cause. I immediately was granted permission to keep the things and soon had gathered a large basket of truck and away I went to carry it back to "Uncle Ned." Seeing my eyes swollen from weeping, he asked the cause. I tried to make as light of the matter as I could, not wishing him to think ill of my mother, but as he went out to empty the basket I heard him mutter something like "such pride and poverty as go hand in hand I never saw before." Coming back he looked at me in such a fatherly way and I wondered did "Uncle Ned" have a little girl like me somewhere. "Well, Bettie, we will settle everything satisfactorily. Now, you have the fruits and vegetables ready for me, and I will either send or go after them every morning about eight o'clock, and so relieve your mother's anxiety about your coming here." I went back and reported this to my mother and she prom-

ised reluctantly, to let me do as I had planned to do, and sell enough truck to buy the pink gingham frock. On hearing this I had to run and tell Aunt Pallas. I had no sooner finished my story (and to prove it I brought the sugar and meat) than Aunt began a perfect tirade of abuse about the "Yankees" and Mars Charles Lee's baby "Betsey" selling truck to de Yankees, and she'd never heard of such disgraceful business before. "I never specks to git over you a little chile sellin' dem nice plums and lettuce to de ole lazy Yankees, and I'll be seized by cats if I ain't scandalized,—me nuthin' but an ole black niggah. Now, Betsey, what in the wold all dese yere white folks agoin to say when dey heah tell of your doins? I'll be seized by cats, but dis shore do beat all." Whereupon I began to cry again, for in my mind I saw myself dressed in the pink gingham frock and all my friends turning their backs on me. I cried harder and louder than before and that brought my mother to the kitchen to see what was the matter. Aunt repeated her words (somewhat modified though). My mother scolded her and in a reproachful voice said: "Why, Pallas, this old man, 'Uncle Ned,' is a gentleman if he is a Yankee, and will either call or send for the things." In the meantime, Aunt Pallas began to wring her hands and say: "Laws a massy, Miss Candace, you shore do beat all, to take things lack you do. Nobody ain't agwine to say one word about 'Betsey.' I never meant dat, but jes wanted to see if de chile was agwine to stick to what she said. She shore don't have to sell dat truck while Ime a liven. I'll sell it to de good fur nothin Yankees myself and bime bye, Betsey,

when you get dat pink frock, dere ain't none of de chillun aroun heah can hold you a candle to walk by."

"Pallas, I want to have no more foolishness from you. There is no disgrace in making an honest living. You know I can't make coats enough to buy Nealie even a store dress, much less Bettie. Calico is fifty cents a yard now and will be even higher in the fall, while I get only four dollars for making a coat, and now that the other women can make vests and trousers for their men folks I don't get as much work to do as I did. If my poor little fatherless child can sell enough truck to buy herself a frock, you should be the last one to speak about it. Oh, if Mr. Lee were only living you wouldn't dare to say such things to her." Then my mother began to cry. That started me afresh. Remorse set in again in Aunt Pallas' conscience, so she wrung her hands and begged my pardon and promised never again to chide me for being so smart. Then I forgot my troubles and mother and I left her to prepare our tea. When the meal was ready I was permitted to have a large cup of kettle tea, sweetened to my heart's content, and a thin slice of bacon, broiled to a turn. Such a thing never happened before. We children were never allowed to eat meat for supper because it made us thirsty in the night and no one wanted to get up out of bed to give a drink of water to a well child. Never before, or since have I tasted such delicious bacon. Mother and "Nalie" relished it so much that I felt pleased to look at them enjoy it. Even Aunt Pallas said "hit is mighty good bacon though it ain't been cured in our smoke house."



The bonnie, bonnie bairn, sits pokin' in the ase,
Glowerin' in the fire wi' his wee round face;
Laughin' at the fuffin lowe—what sees he there?
Ha! the young dreamer's diggin' castles in the air!

—JAMES BALLANTINE.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE BEAUTIFUL PINK FROCK.

Next morning I was called early to help gather the vegetables for "Uncle Ned." Such a lot of greens of all kinds must have given the men a nice meal, for we had a generous supply of everything when the man called for them. I often wished that day that I knew how much money he would pay me for them. The next morning "Uncle Ned" came and gave me two dollars for the two days' supplies, and such riches, accumulated in two days, made me feel quite an important factor in our household. I had almost as much money as my mother for sewing a whole week. My hopes rose high and even the pink dress seemed almost a reality, and black morocco shoes not an impossibility. So we traded along for a week or more, until one day I noticed we had gathered from our garden nearly all that could possibly be spared from our own table, and then my heart sank. I felt it was all over for me—no more money, no pink gingham frock, no morocco shoes, for I knew the ten dollars I had made was not enough to buy all those coveted things. I sat down and was having a cry when "Uncle Ned" came into the garden for his vegetables. I told him between sobs that our supply was too low to let him

have anything else and how my heart, so set on a pink frock, was well nigh broken because I did not have the amount necessary to buy one. "Well, child, don't cry. I am going to Baltimore for a week or two and will take your money and order for a dress and shoes and will bring them back when I return." "Oh, thank you, Uncle Ned. You can buy much prettier things there than we could get here, but I hate to bother you." "That's all right, little girl; you have worked hard and deserve a pretty dress and I'll get the prettiest I can find in Baltimore."

I ran to the house and told mother. "I know Uncle Ned can get your things cheaper and much prettier in a northern city, but isn't it asking too much of him to do it?" "Oh, no, mother, he offered to take my money and buy the frock and shoes for me. I never thought of asking him first."

Of course, I was anxious for Uncle Ned to leave. The days seemed long until the eventful day came. The morning before leaving, he called to get the measure of my feet. My mother then talked with him for the first time and upon my request, gave him the hard-earned greenbacks to pay for my frock and shoes. When I parted with those crisp new bills of money I had worked so hard for I couldn't but help feeling a pang of regret to know that ended my career as a trader with the Yankees, but when I thought of the pink gingham frock I cheerfully handed it over to Uncle Ned. He looked at me, then at my mother. "Mrs. Lee," he said, "I hate to take this money. Let me make a present of it to Bettie and I'll bring her a



Nealie and the Pink Frock.



dress and shoes only too gladly." Mother straightened up and looked surprised, and with a most offended air said, "No, Sir, my daughter, though only a child, cannot accept money from any person, much less from a stranger and an—an—enemy, like you." Seeing his mistake he spoke immediately: "Pardon me, madam, you are quite right and I cheerfully submit to your wishes." When he was bidding us farewell, my mother took occasion to thank him for his kindness to her "baby."

I felt a pang of sorrow at losing "Uncle Ned" even for a visit. Then he took my hand and in a fatherly way bade me goodbye and told me to be smart at school. I watched him, with tears streaming down my cheeks, leave our home and go to the railroad station, where he boarded a train for Baltimore. When the train passed our house I was on the porch waving at the dear fatherly friend standing on the rear platform, his hat in his hand, the wind blowing his white locks, a smile on his kind face. His blue eyes caught one glimpse of my childish form in the doorway,—and on the train sped that carried all my wealth farther and farther away.

I went out to visit "Aunt Pallas" for consolation. "Now, didn't I tell you 'Betsey,' about tradin' with dem Yankees? Shore now he's gone, after eatin' up your truck and got your money too. Honey, you can't fool dis ole niggah. I dun heard it thunder a long time, and I'll be seized by cats if I b'lieve he's ever coming back heah agin."

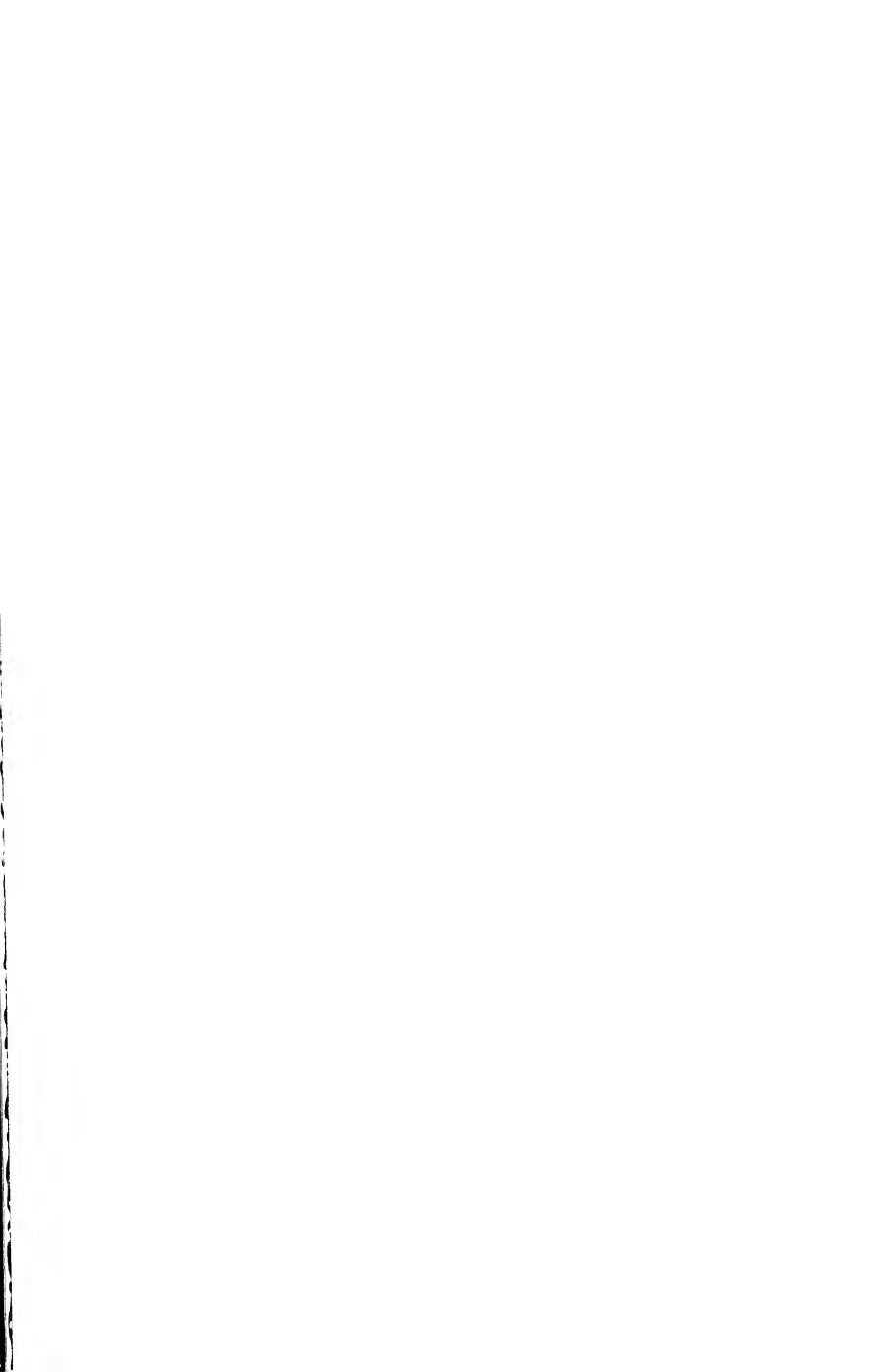
In my childish heart I resented this and as I remem-

bered how he looked at me when he bade me "good-bye," I saw truth written on his dear old wrinkled face, and slamming the door of Aunt's room as loud as I could, I fairly yelled, "I don't care what you say, I know he is coming back."

While she loved me better than anything on earth and I loved her very dearly, we usually disagreed before we ever reached the point of consolation.

A week passed, and no news from "Uncle Ned," though I thought of him many times each day. I said nothing, but every day I ran to the depot to see if he did not get off the train, and every day I went back disappointed. My mother pretended not to notice his prolonged absence. Indeed, I was too proud of "Uncle Ned" to listen to words from anyone that might reflect on him. So, out of respect to my faith in him, all kept silent; even Aunt Pallas kept her thoughts to herself, no doubt at mother's request. I waited patiently for three weeks, and as he did not come I made up my mind to stop going to the depot and watching for him. I felt sure that he had died and I should never see him again. I felt worse about that than losing all my money, and the prospects of frock and shoes.

Not to dwell too long on my misery, for I went to bed with a sorrowful heart at night and would awake the next morning with a sadness that made me long to forget "Uncle Ned" and all I remembered about him and his kindness to me. Still, I did not give up hope entirely, and daily prayed for his return, and one day my patient waiting and prayers were rewarded, for





"Uncle Ned's" Return.

I looked out the window and there was "Uncle Ned" coming down the street leading Sandy Hanff by the hand. They both were carrying an armful of bundles. I ran as fast as I could to meet them, and grasping "Uncle Ned" by the hand, I told him in one breath how glad I was to see him again, "but one day I thought you had died and left me like my father."

"Well, child, I have been very sick and I came near dying. I had a bad case of malarial fever. I thought I'd never see my little Southern children again. I didn't write as I should have done."

By this time we were on the porch and Uncle Ned, who was still weak from his illness, sank down on a chair.

"Now for opening the bundles, children."

Finally, after much pulling and tugging at the strings, there lay in all its freshness the material for a frock, all pink,— a very soft rosy shade that I liked so much. The goods did not look or feel like anything I had ever seen, and I said: "What lovely gingham! I never saw anything so beautiful before, Uncle Ned, and I just think you were too good to buy it for me."

"It isn't gingham, Bettie, but a mousseline something—I can't remember the name. It is much prettier than the gingham you had set your heart on and you can keep it longer, for it is such a soft silk it will wear well."

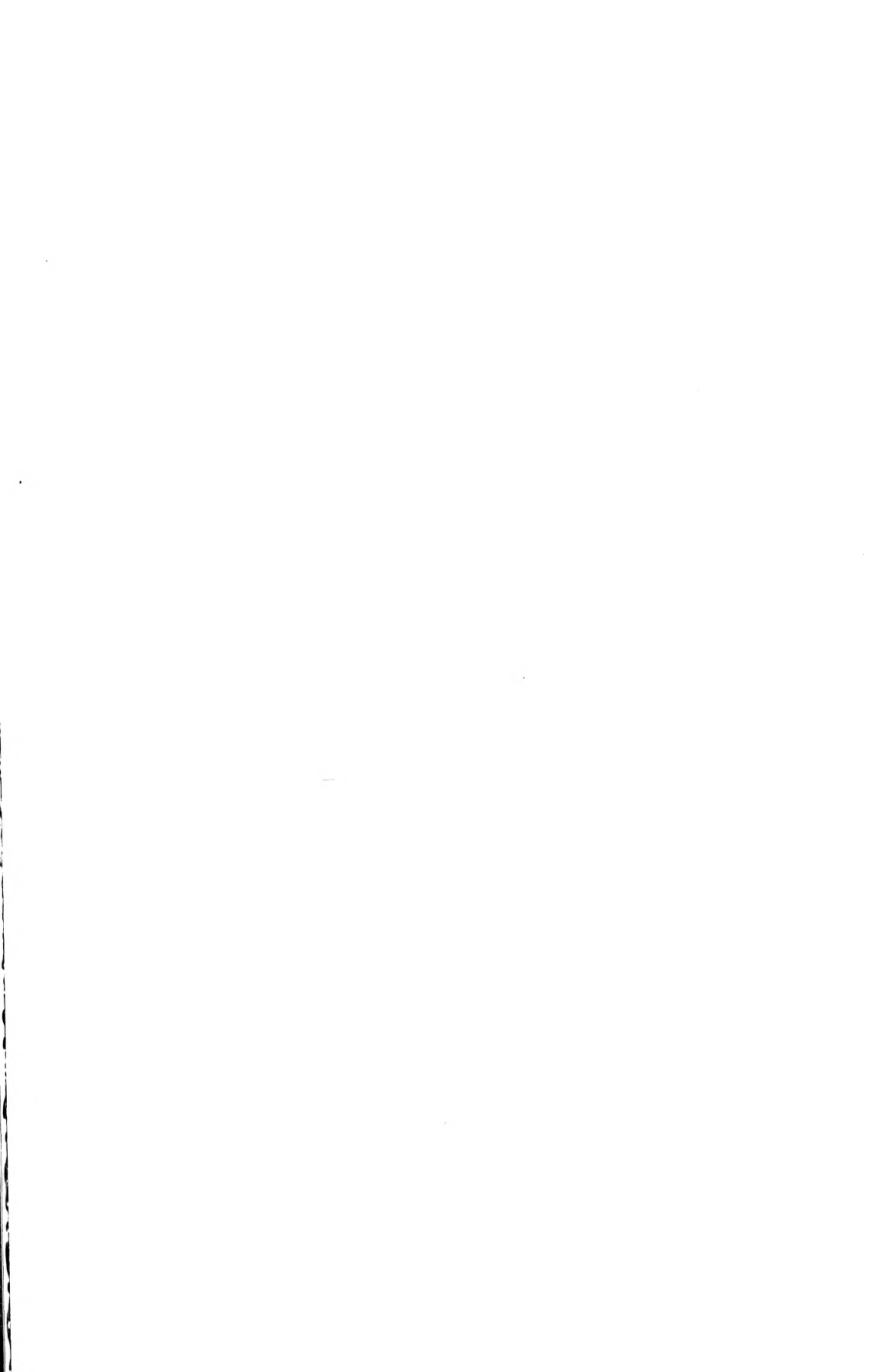
In another parcel was a box full of trimmings, velvet ribbon, white lace, buttons and everything necessary to make a most beautifully finished gown for even a grown lady. Then from another box "Uncle

Ned" brought forth the loveliest pair of black satin slippers with steel buckles. Cinderella's glass slipper was never so beautiful to her as were my own lovely slippers.

"Oh, Uncle Ned, I thank you so much I can't begin to tell you how much I love you for getting me so many pretty things."

In the meantime Sandy Hanff had opened his parcel and found a nice suit of clothes, with hat and shoes to complete his outfit, but nothing could induce me to leave off looking at my beautiful present. After awhile the box of French candy absorbed my attention for a short time. When my mother and sister were called out and saw my treasures, mother's eyes filled with tears of gratitude at the sight of my joy. Nealie kissed me over and over again, she was so happy for me. Old Aunt Pallas, of course, had forgotten all she had said about "Uncle Ned" never coming back and bestowed such praise as only a faithful old darkey can. From that day on to the day of her death she continued to sing his praises. It is needless to say how much I thanked "Uncle Ned" and how much I loved him for his generous gifts, for I knew my poor little money had never lasted to buy such fine goods as he had brought to me.

In a few days "Uncle Ned" was ordered with his men to the southern part of the state and I had to bid farewell forever to the dear, kind friend; for I never saw or heard of him again, but never did I forget to pray for "Uncle Ned."



We shape ourselves the joy or fear
Of which the coming life is made,
And fill our future atmosphere
With sunshine or with shade.

—ANONYMOUS.

CHAPTER XVII.

MY FIRST GREAT SACRIFICE.

I went back to school and studied harder than ever, because I felt that my mother and sisters were doing so much for me by sewing to pay for my tuition. I knew more what the value of money was after trying to make some myself. However, I was happy as the day was long and never grew tired of taking out my treasures every day, and admiring them, and each time I saw new beauties in them. Two months passed away and I had asked my mother every day to make the pink frock for me. Each time she had put me off by saying, "Wait till your school closes and then you will have your frock for the exhibition," as we called the closing exercises. Mother said, "Don't be impatient, now. You have the goods to make it and your frock will be the prettiest there."

Those were very happy days, when the anticipation gave me more pleasure than the reality; but soon the time came when, from being a happy little girl, I was to be a sad and greatly disappointed one. As I said before, my sister Cornelia had a wonderful influence over the members of the family, and especially over me. One day when I was busy playing with my dolls Nealie came in and taking me in her arms

said, "Honey, I have had a letter from Emma Katie Jones, asking me to be one of her bridesmaids the tenth of next month. The maids are to wear pink dresses, but of course, I can't accept her invitation."

"Why can't you, sister?" I asked.

"Because mother is not able to buy me a dress—we are too poor," she sighed.

At this I felt a great lump rise in my throat and choke me, for I instantly thought of the pink dress Uncle Ned had brought to me, and how beautiful it was, and I wished Nealie had one like it, and in the fullness of my heart I said: "I wish you had one like mine, Sister."

She looked sadly at me and with tears in her eyes and with trembling voice, answered: "Your poor sister is grown and has nothing decent to wear to the wedding—" and here she heaved a deeper sigh than before, and made me choke again when she suddenly asked, "How many yards did Uncle Ned bring you?"

"I don't know, sister, but I'll fetch it here for you to see." At this I ran into my room and soon returned with the goods. When she had counted the folds, she exclaimed: "There are fifteen yards, fully."

"Oh goody! Enough for us both a frock."

"Oh dear, no. Just enough for a grown person and entirely too much for a little girl like you." And here I felt another choking sensation and with it a feeling that I might have to give up the pink dress after all. I sat still as if turned to stone, while she looked at me, her big gray eyes filled with tears, and with a hopeless voice said:

"I do wish father or Uncle Ransom were alive; they would get me a pink dress somehow; just think, Julia Flowers and Nannie Gulley are going to wear those pink barége dresses that belonged to their mothers. Do you remember the trunks that were hidden that the Yankees never found—well, they were saved in those trunks. Here I am, with nobody to lend me a dress, while you have all that goods Uncle Ned brought you. Mother says it will waste it to make you a frock out of it, too. There will be several yards wasted—." Here she broke out into sobs. "If you loved your sister like I love you, you would let me have the goods and make a dress for myself to wear to the wedding, then lay it aside till you get large enough to wear it. You know I couldn't spoil it by just wearing it to the wedding. I would give it to you if it were mine and you needed it, but you don't love your sister Nealie that sits and sews day after day for you to go to school. No, don't tell me that you love me; actions speak louder than words."

I could stand no more, but wept bitterly to be accused of not loving my sister. I felt then in my heart I loved her better than any one in the world.

"Yes, I do love you, Sis, but I can't spare my pink frock that Uncle Ned gave me, and please, oh, please, don't ask me to give it up."

"Bettie, I wouldn't ask you for the world. You don't want me to have things like other girls. You don't care if I go to this wedding or not, and if I don't go to that I shall never be asked to go anywhere else. You know Ashley will be groomsman whether

I go or not, and I shall lose him,—and—you know you do like him; that is, you're always begging me to marry him." Here she blushed.

I then began to see myself as a very selfish little girl and my sister grown up and liked well enough by her friends to be asked as bridesmaid at the grandest wedding since the surrender and then on account of her poverty, not permitted to accept the invitation that would give her a chance to outshine all her friends, besides making her supremely happy. I saw myself keeping the pink dress for the close of the school when I had no special way to show it off other than a recitation or reading a composition, and then being envied by my dearest friends. I saw myself in such an ugly picture I did not want to see it again. I knew I ought to give the dress to my sister, but such a struggle took place in my heart that never before or since have I felt quite so bad as I did then. To deny myself the pleasure of keeping the frock, the pretty pink frock that I loved so much, was worse suffering than my pen can describe, for I well knew how difficult it was to get even a cheap frock. I felt that never again would I get another like the beautiful one "Uncle Ned" gave me. Oh, what floods of tears I shed, and my sister wept with me, but insistently said, "You don't love me. If you did you'd want me to go to the wedding and have a good time once in awhile, after all the long years I've sewed so hard to help you through school and buy your dresses. Don't tell me you love me for I know you don't and don't even want me to go to the wedding."

With a wail that came from the bottom of my poor little aching heart, I sobbed out, "Oh yes, sister, I do love you. Please take the goods and make you a dress. I don't care and couldn't ever enjoy it again." Sobbing harder than ever, I went out to the kitchen to Aunt Pallas for comfort and laying my head on her lap I told her my trouble. She cried with me, but said: "Let Pussy have it, honey. She's a grown woman and you know you'se only a little gal, and you do wants her to be de belle an' outshine Miss Nannie an' Miss Julia at dat big weddin,' for nothin' but de quality'll be dere. I'll make you some nice candy right now." But I didn't even care for that, and went into the garden and walked up and down the walk, but everything there reminded me of "Uncle Ned" and caused more heartaches and such a lonesome feeling that I came to the house, went to my room and to bed, where I sobbed myself to sleep. Many times I awoke with a start, to cry myself to sleep again. My mother was greatly distressed and Nealie, too, so they told me afterwards, when I could bear to talk about it without tears, how mother upbraided my sister for being so heartless as to think of taking my frock away from me. The next day I felt more reconciled and after my sister and mother begged me to keep the goods and I begged them to say no more about it but cut it then and there, they both decided to do as I wished. I steeled myself to look at the beautiful rosy material without the tears filling my eyes, though I am certain I swallowed them, for I took a sudden notion to run out into the yard when I knew

they were about to begin to cut into the goods. I saw them through the window begin the sewing, then I ventured in and sat down in my little chair and watched them sewing and fitting it. I had many pangs—like the loss of something held dear but would not have back again.

Oh, how beautiful Nealie looked in that pink dress! Her complexion, so fair always, seemed more beautiful and radiant and soft, with a faint rosy tint reflected from the dress. I watched and enjoyed seeing how beautiful and happy my sister looked, even in the fitting, and I thought how much happier she would be at the wedding.

The day finally came when my sister was preparing to leave for the wedding. I sat in her room and saw her pack her trunk and when the tray was put in that contained the pink gown, I slipped quietly away to my room, and opening the closet door, took down the box with the slippers in it and crept back to Nealie's room again.

"Here, sister, take these slippers. Your feet are small as mine. I have no use for them now," and throwing my arms around her neck, gave her such a hug as must have told her I did love her, and with a wail of sorrow that seemed to say I had given all I had to her, I ran out to my room and knelt down and asked the good Lord to make me willing to give up my frock and slippers to my sister and to keep me from being a selfish little girl ever again and to make me happy over trying to make Nealie happy.

My prayer was answered, for I felt a peace come over me that filled my whole being with joy.

The wedding came off and "Nealie Lee" was said to be the prettiest girl present, and of course, her dress, next to the bride's, was the most beautiful.

When she came home and threw her arms around me and said, "Oh, Bettie, darling, you are the most unselfish girl that ever lived, to give up that beautiful dress and slippers to me. I didn't deserve them a bit. I was the selfish one to take them from you, but oh, they made me so happy. I did feel so well dressed, and, and,—" she stammered, "everybody told me how nice I looked. I know you must love me dearly, too. Forgive me, Bettie, honey, for talking like I did to you. But I want to tell you a little secret—Ashley Sidney admired the dress more than anyone," here she blushed deeply and stammered: "and—I—I have promised to marry him. You know you like him and always said you wanted me to marry him; and think, dearest sister," giving me a kiss, "Ashley might never have asked me, only for the pink dress and—my little sister Bettie's sacrifice."

All hail to the Lordlings of high degree,
Who live not more happy, tho' greater than we;
Our pastimes to see 'em under every green tree,
In all the gay woodland, right welcome ye be.

MCDONALD.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE STATE TOURNAMENT.

“After Darkness comes the dawn,” so after the reconstruction days had passed, came sunshine again into our old North State, and our county, especially, had rebounded from the evils of the war. The few young men of the gallant “Fourth North Carolina Regiment” had returned to their homes after the war, to turn their hands to the work nearest them; but all work is not good even for rebel soldiers to have for a steady diet, so when a feeling of stagnation seized them, one more bright than the rest, suggested that they meet in October and hold a tournament in Clayton, to crown for queen of love and beauty the fairest daughter in the “Old North State.” This announcement was made months before the tournament was to come off, and notices were sent to the various state papers to that effect.

I was attending school in those days at the Academy, where Professor John M. White was principal; he was one of the kindest of men. His patience was a beautiful example for his pupils, who did not appreciate this noble man for all he was worth. He had taken great pains with me in Algebra and Latin, two studies that were most difficult for me to master, but

his efforts were not rewarded as they should have been. I was about fourteen at the time of the approaching tournament, tall for my age, with large brown eyes, that were my only good feature. My nose was too small, my mouth too large, and added to that my age. I had not a single thought of any honors for myself, but I could not help feeling sure that Nealie would wear enough for the family. She had developed into one of the most beautiful girls in the "Old North State." Her beauty had gone abroad in the land; wherever she went strangers never failed to inquire who the beautiful young lady could be. None were ever disappointed, but many were greatly surprised and greatly admired her surpassing beauty. If I could draw a pen picture of her I should be able to depict the masterpiece of old North Carolina. Her hair, face, figure, all seemed as nearly perfect as ever came from the hands of our Maker. Her beautiful brown, wavy hair, so like my mother's, was touched with a glint of gold, which shone out in the light like a ray of sunshine in a darkened room, yet you never thought for one moment that her hair was other than soft sunny brown, though there gleamed always the golden tints in certain lights, and one of her chief charms was the sunlit brown hair, which fell in soft ringlets, when not confined around her alabaster brow. She wore her hair parted in the middle and coiled low on the nape of the neck, leaving a peep at a shell-like ear, her large clear soft eyes, shaded by a fringe of dark lashes, were as blue as the "azure depths," but when aroused grew dark

as the turbulent waters of a stormy sea. The nose was a perfect Grecian, much like my dear mother's also, the delicate nostrils showing such sensibilities as a great artist would love to paint. A rosebud of a mouth, teeth so regular that they seemed truly a part of a beautiful picture, and that picture a beautiful reality. All of these set in an oval face of pink and white, completed the picture, together with a figure of medium height, well rounded proportions, such as I can remember, is a feeble attempt to draw a pen picture of my sister Nealie at the time of the great state tournament at Clayton, North Carolina, on the twenty-first day of October, eighteen sixty-nine.

The day for the tournament dawned brightly beautiful, with a crispness in the air to give greater zest to the sport. Soon the sleepy old town of Clayton was astir with signs of bustle and activity.

Old family coaches whose steps folded up and with rumbles in the back, now rolled into town, with trunks fastened on them. Many of these had never been seen since before the war. Then came young men and girls riding on horseback, who alighted and sought seats in the grand stand. The crowds grew dense, the streets were black with people, all making for the race track, and never since Sherman's army came through Clayton was the old town so full of people.

The coaches and people came from every part of the "Old North State," and were the *elite* of the South. The judges and Knights were composed of the representative men from the different parts of the state. The Knights from our town and county were Ashley

Sidney, Nat Tomlison, John Dodd and Jesse Ellington.

Wake county was represented by Bijou Satre, John Johns and Sim Pool. George Battle from Rocky Mount, Archie Rhodes from Wilson, Billy Hinton from Wilmington, Hardie Horne from Fayetteville.

Ashley Sidney, our townsman, dressed as King Henry of Navarre, looked regal in his purple velvet costume with gold trimmings, white silk stockings, helmet with white plume waving in the breeze, white gauntlets, completed the costume of this regal looking knight. He was a handsome man, with bronzed complexion, a merry twinkle in his dark brown eyes, that caused many a lassie to look at him more than once. Ashley Sidney was one of the boys who had followed "Ole Mars Robert" for four years "nigh about," and only left him when Lee surrendered.

He had come home ragged and barefooted, to find work enough to keep him busy for the next few years. However, a chance to meet some of his old comrades again made him take the leisure to enter this contest. He was the crack rider of our county, and even the whole state had shown no better. So it was with unbounded pride and admiration that our people counted on his winning first honors, even the state papers had mentioned him as a possible winner. If he looked handsome as a ragged, barefoot soldier, he looked kingly as this knight of olden times.

Ashley had known Nealie from her earliest childhood, and in his own quiet way had loved her, but not wishing to render her more uncomfortable by

marrying her in haste, as he wanted to build a little nest for her. It was an understanding between them that when he was able they would be united, although he put no restrictions on her going and coming with other young men, though the family knew he hoped to marry her some day. So when the tournament had been arranged to come off at Clayton everyone felt sure that our town would carry off the first honors, and that Ashley and Nealie both would be the ones to wear them.

Ashley rode a milk white filly, called "Snowball." She was a blooded mare and showed it in her every movement. He had spent much time in training her for the tournament, besides that she was considered about the fastest mare for her size in the state, and it would have to be a very fine racer to beat "Snowball," so our people said. She came from that great family, "Godolphins" Arabian, who have so many racers to their credit.

Nat Tomlison, from a few miles out of Clayton, but living in Johnston county, represented a Knight of "The Star and Garter." He was a fine looking fellow, and in the costume of blue velvet trimmed in white lace, white silk hose, with large diamond buckle on garter and diamond star on heart, helmet with blue plumes, and white gauntlets, made another handsome knight. His horse was brown with a white star in forehead, a showy looking animal with a long mane and tail, plaited and tied with blue ribbons. Her name was "Brownie."

Jesse Ellington, another knight, handsome of face

and form, appeared on the list as "Knight of Lochinvar," in Scottish plaids and kilts, looking the part of the young chieftain to perfection. The horse he was riding was a blood bay, with white stockings, a handsome animal and quite spirited looking. He was called "Lucky Boy."

Hardie Horne as "Knight of Isabella," was costumed in black and yellow satin. He was riding a claybank gelding of unusually good style, called the "Emperor."

Bijou Satre came out as "Richard, Couer de Leon," in black velvet and gold lace, a helmet with a gold plume made him an attractive rider, mounted on a coal black horse, restless and very spirited, well named as "Black Diamond."

John Johns, "Knight of St. Thomas," wearing sapphire blue velvet, trimmed in white lace, helmet with sapphire plumes. He was riding a reddish sorrel horse with white feet, a red mane and tail. She was a racy looking little thing called "Beauty."

Sim Poole as "Knight of St. John," wore a magenta red velvet, trimmed in white lace, helmet from which depended a long magenta plume and white gauntlets completed a very effective costume. He rode a roan colored mare with a short bob tail, with "Queenie" for her name.

Billy Hinton from Wilmington was wearing an emerald green velvet costume, and as "Knight of St. Patrick," was appropriately dressed. He rode a bay gelding with long black mane and tail, with a great deal of style, called "Erin."

Archie Rhodes from Wilson, "Knight of St. Anthony," was in golden brown satin, and helmet with golden brown plumes. He rode a bay mare with black markings, "Jewel" by name.

John Dodd of Raleigh, "Knight of St. Thomas," wore a grey satin costume with silver trimmings, and rode a grey horse. A quiet looking horse, though a good runner, called "Cyclone."

George Battle, as "Knight of St. Louis," did great credit to Rocky Mount, his home. His costume was gorgeous. A rich scarlet velvet, trimmed in silver lace; helmet with scarlet plumes. He rode the "Princess," a beautiful bay mare with dappled spots, showing great spirit and training.

The "Unknown Knight," whose identity was unknown, except to the judges, was costumed in white and gold satin, which set off his handsome form to perfection; the helmet, white, with golden plumes, white gauntlets, though a small black mask covered his eyes and mouth, completed the most elegant costume of all the knights. He carried at first a shield of gold and on it was emblazoned the coat of arms of North Carolina.

The "Unknown Knight" had evidently come from a distant county, for no one seemed to recognize either horse or rider. He was riding a chestnut filly, as neat and trim a little animal as ever entered a race; she was well groomed, and truly a thoroughbred; her flaxen mane and tail were both cropped after the English fashion; her head was small, the ears also, and keenly pointed, which she held well forward;

the eyes large and intelligent, seemed to bespeak your approval; the neck long, arched and small, she carried well up, and needed no check rein; her limbs were small and sinewy, small feet, with hoofs so polished that they reflected the objects around; she was not a restless steed, but on the contrary would close her eyes and rest whenever an opportunity presented itself, but once started on a run you could see every movement was filled with life and quivering with suppressed energy. A word or touch of the spur acted like magic, and like the wind she gathered her powers from some source that seemed to increase when called upon.

As the "Unknown Knight" sat his horse as part of himself, one could not help seeing how both horse and rider were as graceful, in every line, as ever rode through old North Carolina. The cavalier was never stamped more plainly on any one than on this stranger knight.

The course to be run was around the race track. An arch had been built across the track where the finish was made. From a cross bar at the top were fastened at regular intervals, four iron chains with hooks. At the lower end of these hooks were suspended as many iron rings two inches in diameter, and could be easily lifted off by the lance, which measured about ten feet in length.

The knights were to put their horses in a run and come with full speed from the quarter stretch to the finish, then poising their lances, lift the rings from the hooks as they rode underneath them. Each

rider was assigned a number and position, by drawing for them. The judges and grand stands were opposite the arch, and gave full view of the knights as they finished their run. The knights making fastest time and the ones also taking a ring at the same time to be counted as winners.

Oh, young Lochinvar is come out of the West;
Through all the wide border his steed was the best;
And save his good broad-sword, he weapons had none;
He rode all unarmed, and he rode all alone.
So faithful in love and so dauntless in war,
There never was knight like the young Lochinvar.

—SIR WALTER SCOTT.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE GREAT RACE.

The hour had arrived for the races to begin, and the great bell hanging near the judges' stand began to clang, its very tones vibrating with martial sounds, as it seemed to bid the knights to come forth and show the crowd that the days of chivalry had not passed, and to bid them all a cordial welcome. Clang, clang, clang it kept repeating, its tones gradually dying away as the notes of a bugler clad in armour rode forth filling the air with the "Turkish Reveille." Following in his wake came the noble knights in such a blaze of light and color as to cause the multitude to shout for the very pleasure of looking upon such a gorgeous spectacle.

Twelve knights mounted on their restive steeds, whose trappings were in keeping in color with their masters' costumes, were riding four abreast; each thoroughbred showing they were perfectly at home on this circular course. They pawed the soft earth so disdainfully and picked their dainty little feet up as daintily as a grand dame might have done.

"Snowball," "Black Diamond" and "Brownie," coquetting as it were, with the others. They were the favorites of that vast throng, as they halted in front of

the judges' stand to receive the instructions and rules of the tournament. The young ladies in the grand stand had suddenly become so much interested and excited in the "Unknown Knight," he could not pass without such applause and waving of handkerchiefs as must have gratified his vanity. The very fact that he was masked made him more interesting to each girl, to say nothing of the curiosity inherent in us all.

The Knights then drew a number and had a position in the race assigned to them, then clapping spurs to their chargers, they each in their respective positions made a dash around the track. With the long yellow lances glittering in the bright sunlight, like burnished gold, poised in the air, ready for the tilt when the rings would be lifted off the hooks. These grand knights, looking like they belonged to another age and people, made a gorgeous spectacle, and one long to be remembered by those fortunate enough to be present.

The race track was a mile around and gave a test of speed and physical endurance to both horses and riders. The rider having to maintain his position on the course and the posture of his lance to catch off the rings as he passed under the arch.

After a dash around the track, the first division of Knights was called. These four made a great show of starting, and after three attempts they came down to the arch together, the flag was lowered and the starter cried "Go," and away they went at full gallop, "Snowball" on the outside, "Black Diamond" next to her, their contrast as it were making a foil for each other's

beauty. "Brownie" was in third position, while "Erin" had the inside of the track, making a shorter distance for him to go, besides giving him the advantage.

The horses were in good shape, barring a curb that "Erin" carried on his right hock, they all looked to be in perfect condition. There was little difference in the time they were making, and only at the quarter stretch did they begin to make an effort. "Erin's" master making a plunge forward that put the others on their guard, and each in turn, either by spur or bridle, increased their speed. Then a nose would be seen in front, sometimes a head, then the withers, and with lengthened strides, each movement brought them nearer to the arch. Then came "Snowball," the radiant, darting a luminous light, and shot past the others, her rider poised in position, his golden lance like a ray of yellow sunlight, gleaming along the track, wrested the first ring from the hook. "Black Diamond," his coat of glossy black glistening like a sheen of satin, began to forge a trifle ahead, with "Erin" close to his heels, but suddenly "Brownie," beginning to warm up to her work, rushed past "Erin," and side by side with "Black Diamond," the twain came thundering down the stretch, and nearer and nearer to the finish. The arch was almost reached, the riders had assumed the posture for taking off the rings, when "Erin's" rider's lance slipped from his hand as he was tightening his grip on it and struck "Black Diamond," causing them to rear up and in consequence losing the rings. "Brownie's" rider made a dash for the arch, and with his steady hand and eye lifted the ring on his lance

and was accorded second place, amid loud and prolonged applause.

Then they made their way back to the paddock to be prepared for the next race. Nealie and our party were so excited we could hardly sit still for fear our favorites would not win. "How glad I am to see Ashley win the first race, for he has tried so hard to make this tournament a success," she exclaimed. "I am certain he will win easily," I replied. "But see there are other good riders too," she remarked.

A few moments more and the old bell began to clang again, saying to the knights now entering the track, "Come try your luck."

Next came the second division of knights. "Beauty," a red sorrel, whose coat was a sunny red, was a dainty little thing, with a big white star in her forehead. She tossed her proud head as if in defiance of her competitors.

"Queenie," a roan, not pretty to look at, but once on the run was a graceful racer.

"Lucky Boy," a beautiful blood-bay gelding, whose lines were built in a more generous mould, was a racy looking fellow.

"Cyclone," his mate in build, was a grey with dapples so dark that all the ladies exclaimed, "O, how beautiful!"

These four knights were accorded unstinted applause as they passed the grand stand. When the bell tapped they were in position, and the start was made on the second attempt. The race was between the pairs, "Lucky Boy" and "Cyclone" on the outside, neck and

neck, while "Beauty" and "Queenie" were side by side, near the rail. The half mile was made with no effort, but when the three quarters was reached, "St. Francis" put spurs to the "Cyclone" and he shot out like a bird, and getting his position for the arch he gracefully picked off a ring, amid the shouts of the beholders.

"St. Thomas" took another ring at the moment "Queenie" reached the arch, and her master vaulted lightly in his saddle and took another. "Lochinvar" had "Lucky Boy" well in hand, but a swerve of the lance and he missed the prize, as his friends groaned at this "unlucky boy."

Again the gong sounded and out rode the last division of knights.

First came the "Unknown Knight" mounted on "Sunbeam," "Jewell," ridden by Knight of "St. Anthony;" "Princess" Master, Knight of "St. Louis," and the Spanish Knight riding "Emperor," a black stallion.

These four were gorgeous in costumes and trappings, and elicited round after round of applause. The signal was given and they made the start that sent them off on the first trial. The crowd almost held its breath in anticipation of the finish. "Sunbeam" shot out like a veritable sun burst on a cloudy day, her master gently holding her back. These four kept together until the quarter was passed. The crowd yelled louder and louder, calling for their favorites to come in first. "Sunbeam," with no more effort than a ray of light makes to pierce the darkness, simply made one headlong leap and she was a length ahead

of her rivals; the "Unknown Knight" vaulted lightly in his saddle and slipped off a ring so easily that shouts from the crowd rent the air. Following closely was "St. Louis" on "Princess," the grey mare. He sat as if a part of the steed, and with a slight rise in his stirrups, he also lifted a ring. Then "St. Anthony," on "Jewel," clapped spurs to his charger, and with his gilded spear gleaming in the sunlight, he too carried away another ring. "Knight of Isabella," riding the "Emperor," barely missing by a slight swerving of the lance.

The vast throng by this time was in such good humor with everything that they accorded to these four knights such prolonged shouts of approval it was easily seen that more than one would be a winner from this division.

A rest was allowed for grooming and getting ready for the trial and test race. Such chattering among the ladies. "Now who in the world is the "Unknown Knight?" Isn't he handsome even with his mask hiding so much of his face?"

"I wonder if we know him," was whispered among the fair ones. We all made guesses and bets as to who he might be, but no one knew or would tell, so our curiosity only gave greater enjoyment to the rare sport.

The band played "The Sweetest Girl in Dixie," and the gong called forth the first division for the second race. "Henry of Navarre" entered, followed by "Star and Garter," "St. Patrick" and "Richard, Couer de Leon," when the bell again tapped for them to

start. "Snowball" was first in her place, and steadily kept the lead. This was a beautiful race, even if no rings had been taken, and the spectators nearly shouted themselves hoarse, calling for their favorites to come in first. As the horses neared the arch, each rider arose as one man to get more perfect poise of lance, and at the same instant all four were at the arch, ready with four lances glittering as one. "Henry of Navarre" reached and took another ring. "Star and Garter" a second, but "St. Patrick" and "Richard," "Couer de Leon's" horses became frightened and bolted from the track, much to the regret of all present.

Then came an ovation to "Henry of Navarre" as he rode off the track, and Nealie and I were by no means silent, but cheered and waved our kerchiefs as he passed.

Then the gong sounded again, the second division of the second race came forth. "St. Thomas" in the lead, followed by "St. John," "St. Francis" and "Lochinvar." As the first quarter was passed "St. Thomas" gathered "Beauty," the sorrel filly, up with his reins, and with a touch of the golden spurs, she shot out like a cannon ball, passed the little "Cyclone," as the knight lifted his lance and took off another ring. The other knights failed to take a ring, though they made one of the fastest records that day. The applause grew louder, and waving of flags and handkerchiefs continued till the knights had disappeared from the track.

After a wait of fifteen minutes the gong sounded

again, and out rode the third division in the second race. Not one, but all four seemed a favorite as they rode by the grand stand; they were massed as one, and the horses kept themselves on the alert as it were. "Sunbeam," "Emperor," "Jewel" and "Princess" were each quivering with suppressed energy. The nearer they drew to the home stretch, and as each rider, prepared for taking a ring, faster and faster flew their chargers until with a bound and a tilt the arch was reached and the "Unknown Knight" and "St. Louis" each carried away a ring.

Such applause as now rent the air, seemed deafening and bid fair to continue as long as these handsome knights remained on the track.

Then another wait of fifteen minutes, during which the judges declared that time would not permit more than one other race before dark, and decided to have only the ones who had taken rings first, and made faster time, enter this contest, and that the first ones under the arch to take off a ring, should be declared first winners. This seemed as much a race of speed as of skill in poise and directing the golden lances. The excitement even increased, if that were possible.

The bell tapped as these gallant young knights passed the grand stand, their horses as it were keeping time to the strains of "America," inspired each knight to win for his fair lady. By this time the sporting blood was aroused, and every one was beginning to make bets, even the girls were wagering bon bons, handkerchiefs, etc., etc., while the men were playing for larger stakes.

The "Unknown Knight" was not a favorite among the Clayton men, because he was masked, but they saw he was skillful and even better than their best. They were jealous for a stranger to come in and win the laurels from the home talent, but still it must be a fair field and no favorites, even if the stranger did carry off the first honors. So when the judges named the "Unknown Knight" winner of the first honors there was applause, but when "Henry of Navarre" came second they yelled louder and showed they would have liked him for first.

On investigation it was found that the "Unknown Knight," "Henry of Navarre," "Richard Couer de Leon" and "St. Thomas," had made faster time to the arch and had been first to lift a ring from the hook, so they were to ride for first honors, in the same order as the time they had made.

A more beautiful sight I have never seen than those four knights made as they rode forth to win. The bell tapped amid the shouts that filled the air and away went the brave riders. "Henry of Navarre," "Richard Couer de Leon," "St. Thomas" and the "Unknown Knight," their horses almost touched each other, and faster this time than ever, their nostrils dilated, until they seemed living coals of fire; their every nerve so tense, they stood out like whip cords, as nearer and nearer to the quarter stretch they drew, hardly a hair's breadth ahead, yet the faster their fiery steeds seemed to fly, the nearer they kept together. At one time "Snowball's" nose seemed to indicate that she was ahead, and then such

wild shouts for "Henry of Navarre!" "Come on, Henry, you can win easily, let "Snowball" out and come on!" "Snowball"—so each one seemed a favorite as their friends shouted themselves hoarse for them, such a ride to the finish has never been seen since. "Black Diamond," at one moment seemed to be a fraction ahead, then "Cyclone," but "Sunbeam" had never in the slightest changed her gait. Her master knew she was doing well so remained perfectly passive, indeed he might have been an automaton for anything he did, until "Henry of Navarre" sunk the golden spurs deeper into the quivering flesh of "Snowball" as she bounded a length ahead, the "Unknown Knight," with a gentle motion of the bridle, gathered the reins and like a steam engine, she let go her pent up forces and gave a sudden burst of speed that made the spectators wild, as "Sunbeam" neared the arch. "Henry of Navarre" and the stranger Knight so close together, it was as one to the onlookers. So they continued to ride neck and neck almost to the finish. "Sunbeam" felt "Snowball" almost touching her flanks, and with ears pricked up, eyes dilated, every sinew quivering the two riders touching, almost, they reached the quarter and assumed the poise for the taking of another ring, when a flaw of wind blew the mask and caused it to cover the eyes of the "Unknown Knight," as he was on the outside and nearest the grandstand, the spectators shouted for another chance to be given him, apparently heedless to everything but the work he intended "Sunbeam" to do, he dropped the reins from his

left hand and in the twinkling of an eye, adjusted the mask in its place as they neared the arch. With wild yells of approval at this master stroke, the crowd shouted "The 'Unknown Knight' wins!" Standing in his stirrup he whispered one word to "Sunbeam," "go," one touch of the golden spur and she bounded a length ahead of "Snowball" who, with the instinct of her thoroughbred nature, and blowing her hot breath on "Sunbeam's" neck, with all the strength and force within her, struggled to keep the lead, but even she had no more reserve force, and was compelled to drop a length behind. "Sunbeam" felt the guiding hand of her master, whose calm and gentle touch like an electric charge sent renewed vigor and life into her quivering nerves. One second more and she would reach the arch, and with the hot foam burning her neck she shook herself clear of her rivals, the "Unknown Knight" still standing in his stirrups, the golden lance clutched tightly in his right hand, and with one mighty bound "Sunbeam" reached the goal, and her master took off the coveted ring—he a winner of first honors and she the queen of racers.

The lady, in truth, was young, fair and gentle; and never
was given

To more heavenly eyes the pure azure of heaven.
Never yet did the sun touch to ripples of gold
Tresses brighter than those which her soft hand unrolled
From her noble and innocent brow, when she rose,
An Aurora, at dawn, from her balmy repose,
And into the mirror the bloom and the blush
Of her beauty broke, glowing, like light in a gush from the
sunrise in summer.

—OWEN MEREDITH.

CHAPTER XX.

THE CROWNING OF NEALIE FOR QUEEN.

The four knights with faces flushed, great beads of perspiration standing on their foreheads, but smiling, rode up to the judges' stand, where the names were read out, for honors, the "Unknown Knight," first; "Henry of Navarre," second; "Richard Couer de Leon," third; and "St. Thomas," fourth, amid the deafening shouts of the multitude.

The successful knights then were given laurel wreaths, which they placed on their spears and riding around to the grand stand, the "Unknown Knight" scanned the blushing faces of all this bevy of pretty women, finally his eyes rested on Nealie, and without another moment's hesitation he dropped the wreath at my sister's feet. Blushing deeply she stooped, picked up the wreath and placed it on the golden lance. The "Unknown Knight" then placed it around the neck of "Sunbeam," as if to show how much he appreciated her efforts at helping him win the first honors.

Next came Ashley Sidney, as "Henry of Navarre," but with such a scowl of dissatisfaction on his face that strangers wondered what had happened to cloud his erstwhile handsome face. Then looking up and down this line of beautiful faces, he finally moved along and

deposited the laurel wreath at the feet of Miss Nannie Johns, the belle of Wake county. She colored up at the honor, and with a bow and a smile, placed the wreath upon his lance.

Then came Nat Tomlinson, the third knight, and looking as if to find the one pretty face among the bevy of beauty, he dropped the wreath at the feet of Miss Julia Ellington. Following him rode forth the last of the victors, and with a happy smiling face, his golden lance let fall the wreath at the feet of Mollie McCullers. She too accepted, with visible pleasure, the honor Mr. Bijou Satre conferred on her. Following the example of their chief, each knight placed the wreath of laurel around the necks of the faithful steeds, that had made it possible for them to win. The four champions clapped spurs to their horses and away they went around the track again, amid the shouts and applause of the multitude. I was sitting near Nealie and her friends and felt quite as pleased as if the honors had been mine. Glancing at her beautiful face, aglow with joy and excitement, I thought he could not conscientiously have done other than to crown her the real Queen of Beauty. She was surrounded as usual by a number of admirers, of both sexes, who had enjoyed everything to the fullest that day so long to be remembered by us all. After awhile I arose and slipping in a vacant seat near her, took her hand and said, "I am so glad." She whispered "What will Ashley say? He told me he meant to crown me, but Bettie," she murmured in a low tone, "I could not resist, when the successful

knight scanned the faces of this galaxy of beautiful women and laid the wreath at my feet, do anything else but accept the honor, for I consider it the highest compliment to be chosen Queen, when there are others more beautiful than I, besides I know the "Unknown Knight" is a gentleman, for the committee have had all the names for a month, and none but the best from the "Old North State" were permitted to enter the contest." "You ought to be the Queen because you are the very prettist girl here," I remarked. "I am so glad, just think Bettie what it means for a rank stranger to select me from among all these pretty girls," she replied. "Well, you are the very prettiest here, to my thinking, sister," I whispered. "Oh, pshaw, that's because you love me so much." Here she gave my hand a little squeeze. Just then the chairman of the committee came up and said, "Ladies, I wish you to remain seated a few moments longer. I wish to present the Knights to you, so you may make all suitable arrangements about the ball this evening. The Queen, Miss Lee, lives here in Clayton and will take pleasure in telling you how to find the things necessary."

My sister knew all the maids, except Miss Johns, and as the introduction was being made she took occasion to invite the maids to our house to take supper and dress for the ball, as the hotel accommodations were very poor. They seemed pleased to be the guest of the Queen and have a chance to talk over the all important matter of dress for the evening.

"Oh, Col. Fairbault, please tell me who my gallant

Knight is, and what's his name, and where's his hame," my sister pleaded.

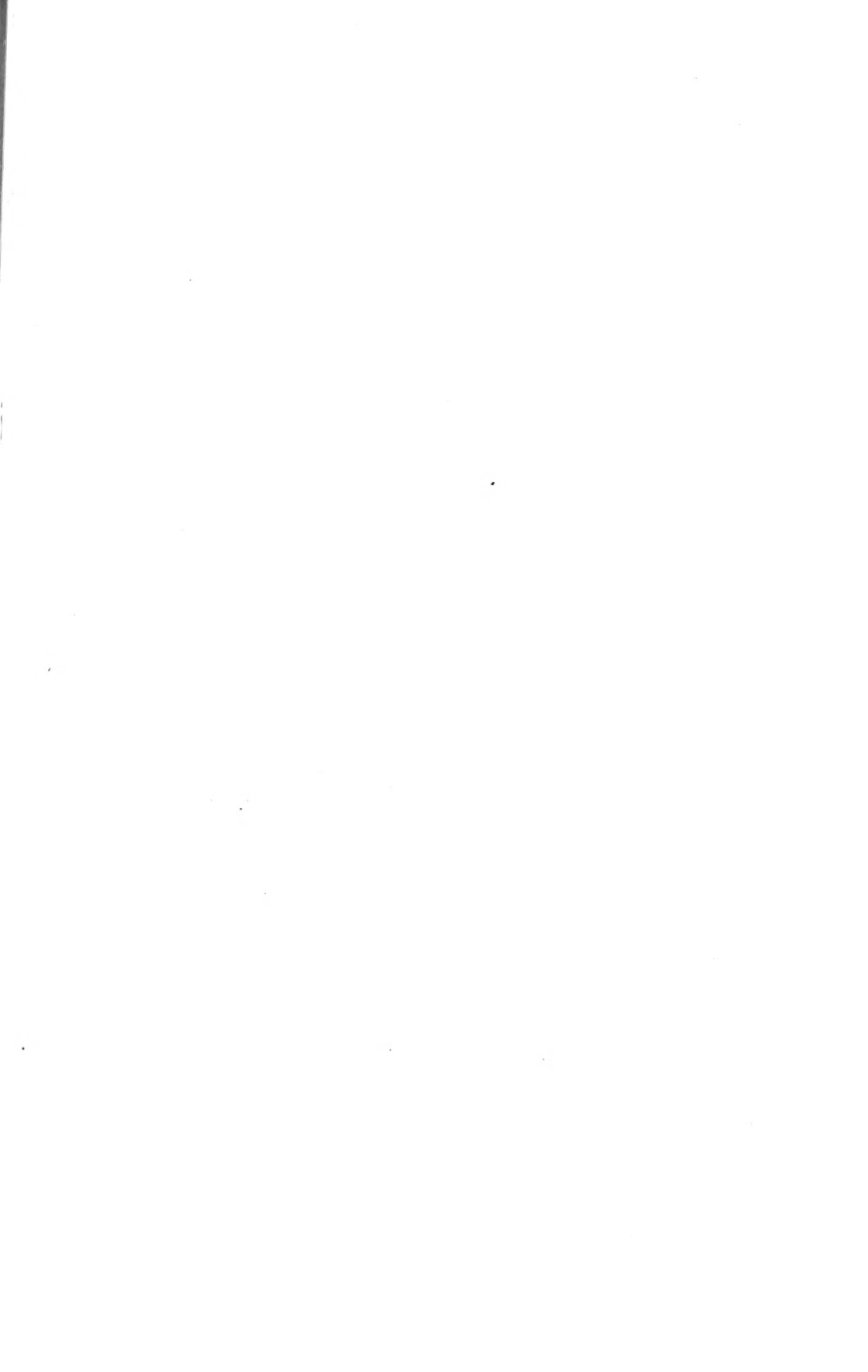
"Here they come; allow me, Miss Lee, to present Mr. Howell of old Wake county, of course you've heard of Tom Howell many times, for his fame has gone abroad as a tournament rider."

Then each maid met her knight. Tom Howell came up, flushed with his success, as handsome as Apollo, his classical face was not more handsome than his manly form. There was a personal magnetism about him that he impressed on every one. To me, a miss of fourteen, he appeared a veritable king, even Ashley Sidney, whom I had always thought so handsome, faded now into an ordinary looking man.

After the introductions were over and these royal personages were arranging to escort the ladies to our house, I slipped away unnoticed to help Aunt Pallas prepare supper, and tell her all about the "Toonamunt," as she called it.

"Well, I allus knowd Pussie wuz de purtiest child her mammy ever had, but you poah little ugly Betsey shor'll never be a Queen."

"Well, I'm glad somebody in the family is anyway," I curtly replied, not relishing the fact that I was so ugly that I never could be a "Queen."



In the midst was seen,
A lady of a more majestic mien,
By stature and by beauty marked their Sovereign Queen.
And as in beauty she surpassed the choir,
So nobler than the rest was her attire;
A crown of ruddy gold enclosed her brow,
Plain without pomp, and rich without a show,
A branch of Agnus Cactus in her hand,
She bore aloft her symbol of command.

THE FLOWER AND THE LEAF.

CHAPTER XXI.

THE CORONATION BALL.

That evening I was called upon many times to help the Queen and maids array themselves in all their finery. My sister Nealie had made a simple white mull, not knowing that she would be the most honored lady in the state that evening at least, and her beauty was the more enhanced for this very simplicity. The filmy mull had a touch of old Brussels lace, the waist made with a round neck from which fell a bertha of the same. From the short sleeves depended a fall of this lace. The skirt was tucked with insertions of the same. She wore no jewels save a necklace of pearls, that had belonged to my father's mother, and had been saved for us by Mr. Bunting, the guard General Sherman sent to us. Her beautiful sunbrown hair was done in a Psyche knot, with masses of little curls peeping out. When I tied the white sash around her slender waist and saw reflected from the mirror the most beautiful vision of loveliness I could not help feeling a pang of something akin to envy, and I know the other girls felt the same.

Nannie Johns wore a pale pink lute string silk with cream Spanish lace trimmings. Mollie McCullers was gowned in pale blue organdie. Julia Ellington

looked lovely in a white dotted swiss trimmed in Valenciennes lace.

When the omnibus drew up to our gate and these gallant knights took their Queen and maids to the ball, it was truly a novel sight. When they reached the ball room all the balance of the knights who had contested in the afternoon, met them at the door and escorted the party to the platform, where the judges were seated.

Col. Fairbault arose as these couples drew near, and in a few remarks, complimented the knights on their excellent taste in selecting these beautiful girls to wear the honors, and as four little girls preceded them, dressed in white, bearing crimson velvet cushions on which were resting the jewelled crowns. The Queen's was a fac-simile of Queen Victoria's, the others more like the ducal coronets.

When Col. Fairbault finished his speech, he took the crown and presented it to the knight, who then placed it on the brow of my sister, Nealie, each knight crowning his fair lady; then the Coronation March was played by Johnston's band from Wilmington. This grand march was led by the successful knights and ladies, Tom Howell and my sister leading.

Ashley was jealous of another winning the coveted prize of crowning the Queen of love and beauty on this auspicious occasion, especially since that one was the girl he had loved so long. Still there was enough of the chevalier in his make up to bear the disappointment without an outward sign to his opponent. So much for the schooling he had received while being a



"Dropped the wreath at my sister's feet."

M. J. G.

soldier in the war; and the old saying "that all's fair in love and war," made him willing to give this stranger a chance to meet and possibly win the girl he loved.

As the evening advanced my sister Nealie remarked to Mr. Tom Howell, "It was so kind of you to crown me Queen, when I was a stranger and you knew Miss Johns, too. I can't understand why you selected me," she innocently remarked. He simply remarked, "Why does the magnet turn to the pole?" She ignored this, but when the next waltz with Ashley, he said, "Nalie, I can't bear to see you with Tom Howell, and I want you to tell me tonight, that my love for you all these years is not in vain, that a handsome fellow like Howell can't come in and win you from me. Promise me now that you will marry me before the winter is over. I can make you comfortable and I will not let a stranger come and take you from me. Promise me now to be my wife. I can't have Howell and myself both paying court to you at the same time."

She looked up into his lovelit brown eyes and saw there a love that only death would obliterate, and answered timidly, "I will be your wife, Ashley, never fear Tom Howell. I am not so fickle as you may think."

That night when Mr. Howell escorted her home from the ball and was ready to leave, he asked, "Miss Lee, will you permit me to visit you sometime in the near future? I must see you before long, don't put it off." She hesitated, and then remembering how long he had loved her and how loyal Ashley had been,

replied, "Mr. Howell, you have paid me the highest compliment by crowning me Queen of this ball, and I sincerely thank you and greatly appreciate the honor, and I offer you the hospitality of my home at any time, but I must be frank with you and tell you that I am engaged to Mr. Sidney and will be married very shortly. I could not embarrass you this afternoon by refusing the crown, but thought the easiest way was to accept it. Again I thank you very much. He took her hand and pressed it, as he said "Farewell, Miss Lee, I envy Sidney more than you'll ever know," and he was gone.



Two wedded from the portals stept:
The bells made happy carollings,
The air was soft as fanning wings,
White petals on the pathway slept,
 O pure-eyed bride!
 O tender pride!

—GEORGE ELLIOT.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE MARRIAGE OF ASHLEY AND NEALIE.

It took the staid little town of Clayton some time to recover from the effects of the great state tournament. Such a grand event, gave the inhabitants food for gossip for many months, the pride that each one felt in living in such a town as had immortalized itself by such deeds of knight errantry, showed either in the conversation or the manner of our people. No other town in the "Old North State," before nor since the war, had been able to do more than show little riding contests, but to give a tournament in regal costumes, and then the Queen being a native of that town and the second best rider a resident from his birth, was enough to make Claytonites so exclusive that many years passed before they even cared for the town to grow any more lest they would blot out the old race track or destroy some other landmarks of past greatness; indeed no one wanted any strangers within her gates, for we were sufficient unto ourselves. Ashley and Nealie, however, decided to marry at an early day, while I continued to trudge daily to the old Academy to learn what Prof. White could teach me.

The wedding of Nealie and Ashley was quietly

celebrated, both of them preferring it should be so. The ceremony was performed by Dr. Ellington, and they went immediately to the little home he had prepared for her.

My mother did not give her up willingly, for her children were so much a part of herself, it was like tearing her heart out, still the nearness to our home and the good man she was getting made her see the wisdom of such a choice, and put no obstacles in the way.

It was odd to see such a "queen among men," as Nealie had always been, settle down to domestic life, and seem perfectly happy with the admiration and love of one man, for she had played with many a young man's heart, though I believe she was always sincere and honest in it at the time.

There seemed so few ways of amusing ourselves after the tournament, that our young people had recourse to many things, but everything seemed tame compared to that great event. Yet we girls were still hoping that something equally as exciting might come along, though the only real excitement was caused by "trying our fortunes" in various ways. The first day of May was auspicious for such things as looking in the well to see our future husband reflected from a mirror, which we held over the well; sometimes a face would be reflected and sometimes, the old maids tell us, that a coffin would appear instead, and that was a sure sign that we would always remain single, but another better and surer way "to try our future" was on Hallow E'en. One of my friends told me of such

a new way, that we made up our minds to try it when Hallow E'en came. Addie Terrel came over to see me and said:

"Well, Bettie, tonight is the time to try our fortunes and see if we are ever to marry, or are doomed to be old maids." "Are you going to try it the egg fashion?" I asked. "Yes, we both have to cook an egg and peel it, then cut into halves, taking out the yolk, filling the whites with table salt, and eating these without drinking one drop of water, or other kind of liquid, and going to bed to dream of your future husband giving you a drink of water, and which if given in a gourd means you will marry a poor man, but if given in a glass, means he will be rich. During the whole time you are preparing the egg, both of us have to do everything at the same time, for instance like both taking hold of the egg and both putting it on to boil, both taking it out and both peeling and cutting it in two, and eating it also at the same time, but be sure to keep silent, for if one word is spoken from the beginning until the night is over and you have dreamed, the charm will be broken, and it will be no use to proceed further with trying to find out who our future husbands will be, and whether we shall marry rich or poor men."

It was one of the most difficult feats I ever tried to perform, to keep from speaking, and to keep from laughing was even worse, and I am sure we did snicker once or twice before we finished our repast. We both dreamed, but my friend's dream was easily interpreted, for the young man that gave her the drink of water was one we both knew.

“Well, Addie” I said, “my dream is so confused I can’t interpret any of it, except I was given a drink of water in a glass mug, with the handle broken off, so I think that signifies that he will not be so very rich after all. The young man was handsome, though, and his genial nature shone out even in my dream, but I am sure he will belong to the circus or something queer, for he was riding in one of the oddest looking turnouts I ever saw. Oh, pshaw, I wish I had dreamed of somebody I know, like you did.”

How much of this strange story became the truth, I leave my readers to find out.

FATE.

Two shall be born, the whole wide world apart,
And speak in different tongues, and have no thought
Each of the other's being, and no heed;
And these o'er unknown seas to unknown lands
Shall cross, escaping wreck, defying death;
And all unconsciously shape every act
And bend each wandering step to this one end—
That one day, out of darkness, they shall meet
And read life's meaning in each other's eyes.
And two shall walk some narrow way of life,
So nearly side by side that should one turn
Ever so little space to left or right,
They must needs acknowledge face to face;
And yet with wistful eyes that never meet,
With groping hands that never clasp, and lips
Calling in vain to ears that never hear,
They seek each other all their weary days,
And die unsatisfied—and this is Fate.

—SUSAN M. SPALDING.

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE CONQUERING HERO COMES.

The day was glorious, flooded with sunshine and melody. The song birds were singing their sweet songs of love to their listening mates. The very air was filled with music, for every little warbler in that vast forest was sending out a roundelay of song. The sky was perfectly clear and the "azure depths" so far away seemed that nothing could cast a shadow over them.

From the West came a rumbling noise, and presently a beautiful pair of blooded bays came into view, drawing what might be a circus wagon, or a wagon from the fire department. The noise and rumble interrupted this musicale that the birds were giving, and disturbed the harmony of all nature on this peaceful day.

Seated upon a curiously constructed vehicle were two men on a high driver's seat. One was a young man, apparently about nineteen, and a colored driver. Coming near the cross roads, the driver looking up asked, "Which road mus' I let de hosses take, Mars Jess?" "Oh, it don't matter, Henderson, give the horses the reins and let them go the way they will, it's all luck."

The driver then slackened the reins and the horses stopped a moment, looked down the roads, and with a toss of the head, the leader started, the off horse looked approvingly at the other, and they both started down the East road.

"Henderson," said the young man, "I believe they have taken the Smithfield road, but I reckon it is as good as the Fayetteville, and we shall find as much work on it."

"I think we have several hours of hard driving before we reach a town or village, suppose you let the horses step along some."

Then they lapsed into silence for a few moments, but the young man, evidently of a happy turn, began to whistle, "Won't You Love Me, Mollie Darling," which tune he continued to whistle until the song-birds of the forest had long since quit their warbling to listen to this strange music that filled the air. Finally he stopped and said, "Henderson, tomorrow is Sunday and we must stop at the first village we reach. I don't want to spend Sunday with the farmers."

"Dat's right, Mars Jess, dey shore ain't no fun hangin' around dese piney woods, and I sutlinly hope you'll get to a town." "Yes, Henderson, you want to get where you can get something to drink." "Yas, sar, I don't mind if I do, seems how hit's Sunday and dere ain't no place for me to 'tend church."

Then the young man began to whistle "Molly Darling" again, and only the rattle of the vehicle and the barking of a dog now and then broke the stillness.

The horses were a pair of beauties, deep blood bays,

"Give the horses the reins, Henderson, and let them go the road they will!"



Binks



with a white star on forehead, the only touch of color. The limbs were small with black markings, the long flowing mane and tail giving grace to their movements. Their heads were small,—keen pointed ears standing straight forward, with mild eyes, though spirited looking. They were well rounded and sleek as satin, and it was hard to tell which was the faster. Such a perfect match had not been easy to find, and the young man seemed to know it and look upon them with eyes that bespoke how proud he was of them. The young man himself was well worth looking at. He was a fair haired youth, with clear healthy complexion, a nose rather aquiline, deep set blue eyes, a brow that was broad and full. The mouth was well shaped, the corners of which turned up, giving his face a mirthful and happy expression. He was smooth shaven, and showed a chin that was well shaped, though not prominent; while it could not be called weak, it lacked fullness to show a more handsome face. His form was of medium height and his massive military shoulders and chest showed such a fine development that he appeared less tall than he really was. His arms and limbs were muscular, as if trained in a gymnasium. His hands and feet were noticeably small. Altogether he bore the marks of aristocratic breeding and a highly refined face.

Still they continued on their way, and the shadows lengthened until the sun, no longer visible, had sunk behind the western hills. The cotton fields, now in full flower, were being deserted by the darkies who had been chopping cotton all day, and still no town

or village seemed near to the travelers. Finally Henderson called to one of the hands to know how much farther he had to drive to reach town. "Jest about two miles," was the answer.

The tall pines standing as sentinels along the road side were no longer to be seen, and in the distance might be seen the little town of Clayton. Henderson drove along the main street until he reached a hotel of rather poor pretentions. Alighting, the young man went inside for a moment and asked if he could be housed for the night and next day, with accommodations for both horses and driver. An answer in the affirmative was given him, and he went back to his team and vehicle.

In the meantime a large crowd of boys had gathered to find out what this oddly built carriage was. One boy, more inquiring and curious than the others, could not resist asking, "What might this be, Mister? Are you with a circus?" "No sir, I am not now, but I don't know how soon I may be."

He was busy unlocking something like a chest, and from this vehicle he took a banjo. The urchins still consumed with curiosity, and not getting any satisfaction from the young man, the same interrogator, not liking to give up, blurted out, "I'd give a yoke of oxen to know what this thing is." "Well, if you won't ask any more questions, I'll tell you." "No, I won't ask any more if you tell me," said he. "Well, it is a Thunder Pole Wagon," said the young man, whereat the poor chap looked more puzzled than ever. Some one in the crowd cried out, "He means a light-

ning rod wagon." "Smart boy, go to the head of the class," said the owner, whereupon he set to asking questions himself about the size of the town, the churches, etc. The wise young man answered his questions, and when he told him that there were two churches, a Methodist and a Baptist, our friend said, "Bully, I'll get to go to church tomorrow anyhow." "Yes, but not till after a big baptizing comes off at Stallings Mill Pond, then Dr. Harrell will preach at the Baptist church." "Dr. Harrell, did you say? Why he married my sister and was living in Selma when I heard from them last, but then old preachers are kept moving around. Where do they live?" His informant told him how he might reach the home of his sister.

"Any pretty girls around here?" asked our young friend. "Oh, a few, but they most all have fellers." "That so? Huh! I don't mind to meet a fellow if I can get to see a pretty girl once in a while," said he. "Well, Dr. Harrell's girls are mighty pretty, and lively to beat the band, but our native born pretty girls are Lizzie and Evelyn Creech, Bettie Stallings and Bettie Lee." "Why so many Betties?" "I don't know but I reckon it was the fashion to name 'em Bettie at that time." "Which is the prettiest one?" "Well, that's according to your taste, you better see 'em first."

After his baggage had been removed and Henderson given directions where to take the turnout, the young man went in the hotel and going to the register, took the pen and wrote upon a clean page, "Jesse Mercer, Wilson, North Carolina." After supper, taking

his banjo under his arm, he started to find his sister's home, they were more than surprised to see him, his evening was spent most pleasantly, as the girls were very fond of music and he was too, they all made merry till late that evening.

"Well, girls, what are you going to do tomorrow?" asked Jesse, as he was leaving. "Going to the baptizing at Stallings Mill," they both cried in one breath. "Very well, I'll take you on my lightning rod wagon," said he. "Oh no, Uncle Jesse, we're sorry, but we can't go with you, for we have planned to go with Vic Thompson and Bettie Lee in his dump-cart," said Ida, the oldest girl. "The dickens you are, and who is Bettie Lee?" "Oh, Jesse," said his sister Ann, "she's the prettiest thing you ever saw in your life." "She has big brown eyes," said Rosa, "and she has skin as white as a snow bank," said his sister Ann. "She's tall and slender," chimed in Ida, "and has a beautiful nose, though very small and a large mouth, but she is really a pretty girl, but Uncle Jesse, she can't sing a note, for father tried to test her voice to sing in the choir and she broke down and cried before us all and couldn't even sing the scales." "Well, I don't care, Jesse," said his sister, "you'll fall in love with her the moment you lay your eyes on her." "Golly, but I'd like to see her. I can hardly wait till tomorrow." "Well, she has lots of beaux, and that's why she is going with Vic to get rid of the whole bunch for one day." "Oh, we are going to have a picnic in that dump-cart," said Rosa. "Vic is my sweetheart now, but every now and then he goes to

see Bettie and tells her how much he loves her, but she just laughs at him and tells him she knows he has had a falling out with his sweetheart. She likes him too well as a friend to let him mistake friendship for love, and he always keeps her for a friend, and she looks upon him as a confidant and true friend."

"Well, I am going to find some of her beaux to go with me to the baptizing, and see what they say about this beauty."

"Well, Uncle Jesse," said Ida, "Bettie would rather run out to keep the calf from drinking the milk than to entertain a porch full of young men and lose the milk. Why I declare, Uncle Jesse, father was there and saw her look out on the street and see a little calf get out of a pasture and run to its mother and begin to drink the milk, when Bettie jumped off the porch and ran at the top of her speed, she can run as fast as a race horse, to separate the little old calf from the cow, and a half dozen young men there too. Why, I wouldn't do that for every cow in the world."

"Well that's all right, I'm more anxious than ever to see her."

The fountains mingle with the river,
And the rivers with the ocean;
The winds of Heaven mix forever,
With a sweet emotion;
Nothing in the world is single;
All things by a law divine
In one another's being mingle—
Why not I with thine?

—PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY.

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE BAPTIZING AT STALLINGS' MILL.

Sunday morning dawned in unclouded splendor. I was up betimes getting ready for the baptizing.

Two years had passed since the tournament, and as Nealie had since married I was the only child left with mother. I was still going to school at the old Academy, and had about finished the course. I had grown tall and my dresses now were made more like a grown lady's. A new white pique dress made for this occasion was in the very latest Raleigh fashion. A basque reaching well below the hips with bell sleeves, an overskirt, almost reaching to the bottom of the skirt, all of which were trimmed in white fringe. I wore a "follow-me-lads" of cardinal red ribbon fastened around my neck, a small bow in front with the streamers half a yard long tied at the back, and which continually blew in the breeze, so that the lads could not help seeing and following the wearer. I wore a large hat, called a "sundown" of white straw, trimmed with a wreath of daisies. When I had put the finishing touches on my toilet I felt that I was well dressed, if not pretty; a thing I never could hope to be, but the consciousness of being well dressed

in the latest fashion, and everything to match gave me as much pleasure as if I had been beautiful.

My mother came in to see how the new outfit looked, and to caution me not to let the sun shine on me and get my face sun burned. "Now Laura, be careful and don't get sun burned, because your skin is dark enough anyway, and a girl looks so unladylike tanned. Your hat will shade your face some, but I told Victor to be sure and carry an umbrella so you girls could be protected from the sun."

Looking out of the window, she exclaimed, "Here is Victor now with the girls, calling you." Kissing my mother hurriedly I ran out to the street, when I found the little dump-cart, with my friends ready to pull me up. Vic and Rosa sat in little chairs in front so that he might drive, while Ida and I sat in small chairs back of them. We really were packed in like sardines in a box, but still that made it all the funnier for us. The little two wheel cart was drawn by a pretty brown horse that Vic had raised. She was fat as a butter ball, but a good traveler. Rosa and Ida were gorgeous in pink and blue lawns. Vic with a white duck suit and straw hat, gave a rather attractive look to our homely little turnout.

As soon as we started, Rosa said, "Uncle Jesse is here and wanted us to go with him on his lightning rod wagon, but we wouldn't miss this fun for anything." "I told Uncle Jesse how pretty you were, Bettie," she continued to rattle on, above the din of the cart.

"Uncle Jesse is the funniest thing you ever saw,"

said Ida. Still I only pictured an elderly man. Soon we were well on the way to Stalling's Mill, people were driving in all kinds of vehicles, some few walking. The sun in the meantime had grown hotter, though there was quite a breeze now and then. Remembering what my mother had said, that I must take care of my complexion, Ida and I found the umbrellas and brought them forth. Much to our amusement Vic had found two that were worn out, but for the fun of it we hoisted them to let in the sun in streaks. Finally a big flaw of wind turned them inside out, and then our fun increased. We shouted with laughter, and continued to keep the umbrella frames over us. When we were passing other vehicles we sat perfectly still and never so much as smiled, but out of sight we laughed until the tears ran out of our eyes.

Hearing a loud rumble and seeing a cloud of dust rising back of us, we dimly discerned the outlines of a strange turnout. "Why, that's Uncle Jesse now on his 'Thunder Pole Wagon,' as he calls it," cried Ida in high glee. "Yes, look Bettie, he has Ben Yelvington and a crowd of the other boys." By this time the horses of the "Thunder Pole Wagon" were at our very back, and looking up and expecting to see a middle aged man, I was astonished to behold a handsome young man, his whole face aglow with mirth and good humor which seemed to radiate on all about him. Catching sight of our would-be umbrella-shades, turned upside down, he simply shouted with laughter, but remembering we were young ladies, and one that he had never met before, he lifted his straw hat

and called out, "How dye children! How are you this morning? You look like you feel pretty salubrious."

"Your friend and admirer, Ben, is looking to speak to you, Bettie. Why don't you look at him?" asked Rosa. So glancing timidly I saw Ben's smiling face, and bowing to him, I caught another glimpse of "Uncle Jesse," who was trying to get Ben to start up a conversation with me, to give him another chance (I suspect now) to see me better. I chatted on, and felt my face turning crimson, from the gaze of this handsome stranger, or no, was it sunburn? Of course it was sunburn, I told myself.

"Say, Ida, don't you ladies want to stop at Stalling's well and get a nice cool drink of water?" "Oh, yes, Uncle Jesse, we are dying for a drink," and then she winked and nodded, which he returned.

"Oh, maybe you want to drive ahead," said Vic, "if you do, go on, we don't care." "Oh, not for anything would I drive ahead and get these pretty girls all covered in dust, besides," he added to Ben, "we couldn't see them without getting kinks in our necks."



There is a time when life is life indeed,
When love is love and all about it bright;
It is betrothal when great joy has need
Of sleep to cool the hot heart of delight;
Because of you this sweetness came to me,
And with a chain of flowers my life was led,
But after all what may the meaning be?
Why a betrothal if we may not wed.

—GUY ROSLYN.

CHAPTER XXV.

THE MEETING AT THE WELL.

In a few minutes we had reached the Stallings' home and in the yard near the roadside was a well of water. Stopping the horses, Ben said, "Let me run and draw the water and give the girls some." "Not much," said Uncle Jesse, "I planned that to meet the pretty girl in the cart." So jumping from his high seat, he went to the well and drawing a bucket of water, gave a broken glass full to each of us, as often as he could persuade us to drink.

"Uncle Jesse" was duly presented to me and began immediately to say nice things; of course I pretended not to notice, but as I looked at him, I saw something in his face that I had never seen before, something that told me that I could love him. He left us and went back to his "Thunder Pole Wagon," and the remaining short distance was spent in composing ourselves for the religious exercises. When we reached the pond, we alighted and went down to the water's edge to watch the baptizing. Vic tied his horse and walked down with Rosa. Our umbrella, a thing we now needed, was of no use to us, but "Uncle Jesse" had a brand new one and begged to be allowed to hold it over me, while Ben protected Ida from the sun's fierce

glare. "Miss Bettie, I beg your pardon, Miss Lee, why did you and Ida inconvenience yourselves by riding in that horrible dump cart when Ben told me you had 'dead oodles' of fellows anxious to bring you in some more comfortable buggy or other carriage?"

"We thought it would be fun and a novelty too, to drive out in a dump-cart and, not to be bothered by the young men, but just have a good time, you see. Not much of an excuse to be uncomfortable," I continued, "but just because we wanted to do it." "I never could live in a town near you and let you do such a thing, Miss Bettie, I mean Miss Lee," he said again. "Don't bother about Miss Lee, just call me Bettie or Laura, or Betsey." "All right Miss Betsey, may I call on you this afternoon? You know who my people are in Clayton and in the state, so don't treat me like a rank stranger, please ma'am," he pleaded. "Very well, Mr. Mercer, you may call," but just here came the candidates for baptism, and Doctor Harrell with them, and the conversation ended abruptly.

Dr. Harrell was dressed in a long black robe, bare headed, holding in his hand a stick with which he took the depth of the water every few feet. Following him were forty women and men walking by twos, all singing, "Wash me and I shall be whiter than snow." Whereupon the whole crowd joined in excepting myself and a few others. "Why don't you sing, Miss Betsey?" said Jesse. "I had throat trouble for years and lost my voice and can't sing." "Come, join in the chorus any way," he urged.

"No, I beg you not to ever ask me again, because I

am liable to break down and cry if you do," I said. "Not for worlds would I bring a tear to those pretty brown eyes," he replied.

We hushed again to look upon the water of the old mill pond, now bearing on its bosom the precious souls that had been freed from sin, by the Doctor dipping them down into the water and bringing them up again and pronouncing the words, "I baptize you, my sister, in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, Amen," and then singing a verse of "Whiter Than the Snow."

After the forty had been immersed in this Jordan, we sought our carriages and went to the Baptist church where Doctor Harrell preached a sermon.

"Uncle Jesse" held the umbrella over me every time he had an opportunity, and I did not object, but rather liked it. Of course all the nice things he said about my beauty I simply took for flattery, and it made no impression, except to remind me how homely I was when compared with Nealie, and I never believed it, whenever I was called pretty, for I could see the difference in her beautiful face and my own.

Love, I will tell you what it is to love!

It is to build with human thoughts a shrine,
Where hope sits brooding like a beauteous dove,
Where Time seems young and life a thing divine.
All tastes, all pleasures, all desires combine

To consecrate this sanctuary of bliss.
Above, the stars in cloudless beauty shine;

Around the streams their flowery margins kiss,
And if there's heaven on earth, that heaven is surely this.

—CHARLES SWAIN.

CHAPTER XXVI.

JESSE FALLS IN LOVE AT FIRST SIGHT.

That afternoon I had barely finished dinner when I saw Mr. Mercer coming up the walk. He was just as smiling and happy looking as ever. I had my mother to meet him and she soon left us to ourselves. "I have never seen a girl before that I wanted to make my wife. It is rather a short time to say this to you, but believe me, it is a case of love at first sight. I never believed it before, but, Miss Betsey, I feel like I have known you always and always loved you."

"I beg of you not to say those things to me," I nervously replied, "I am only a child yet and I hope not near through school, though I doubt whether I can ever go away and leave my mother alone, even to graduate."

"I know you are a child, and I am just nineteen in November, but since I have seen you I can promise you to work hard and in a short time be able to make you comfortable."

"Do you know, Miss Betsey," said he, "that my horses helped me to find you? There is no getting away from it, they brought me to you and luck, that is all the luck I want—to know you and win you, and I'll be happy till I die. Then he told me how they

came to the cross-roads, and the driver asked which road to take and he said " 'Let them take the road they will, and that will be luck,' and here is my luck to know you and to love you. Oh, how I bless the day they brought me here to you, Miss Betsey!"

"Oh, don't talk of such things," I replied, "I am too young to listen."

"I can't help telling you," he replied, "it is now so firmly rooted in my heart and mind that you are to be my wife some day, I can't resist talking about it. Won't you try to love me, Miss Betsey, if I prove myself worthy? Promise me that you will." I felt then in my secret thoughts, that I not only *could* love him, but *did* love him, as I had never dreamed I could love any man. Yet I must carefully guard that secret, for I well knew it would not do to let him know it. He wooed me that Sunday afternoon with so much ardor that I must have let him know in some way that it was not against my own heart to listen to his pleadings.

"Why, Mr. Jesse, you talk this off so glibly to me, I am sure you are accustomed to tell every girl you meet the same thing."

"I will admit I am fond of girls and often say pretty things to them, but I never have, as I hope to die, said the same things to them that I say to you, and ask you to be my wife. 'Tis true I am in no position to marry you yet, and some one else who doesn't and can't love you half like I do may marry you. No, I must have you some day for my wife, whether you say 'No' now will make no difference. Later on, I must call you my own."

I felt myself being drawn irresistibly to this stranger, and that he was but speaking from the depths of his heart, but when I remembered that I had been brought up to look upon marriage as a step to be taken, not lightly, nor hurriedly, I knew that I ought not continue to listen to such words from him.

I had one beau that I had known since childhood days, and I had begun to look upon his visits as tending towards marriage, but he knew I was still in school, and would not dare to offer himself then, still as I thought of Richard Madison then, I knew that I did not love him and only mistook friendship for love.

"You must give me time to think over all you have said," I ventured to remark. "Very well, I shall be here and in the vicinity for several days, as I find plenty of houses that have no lightning rods. I am doing this work because there is a big profit in it, but every house I put rods on I am cutting out of the business for future needs, so you see it must be only a stepping stone to another business. I am working now for money to engage in manufacturing later on."

As he was rising to take his leave, he asked me, "Miss Betsey, may I take you to church tonight?" I had to say "Yes," despite the fact I thought I was being "rushed" a little too much.

When I told my mother of this, she said, "I am surprised at you, but as you have promised and we know his sister so well, you may go." On the way home he wanted to get back on that subject of the afternoon, but I managed to steer him into another

channel, by talking of his adventures in the lightning rod business.

When I bade him goodnight at the door, he took my hand and gave it a gentle pressure.

Monday morning I was on my way to school, and I had to pass the hotel and there, sitting talking to a crowd of young people, was my more than friend. Seeing me, he jumped over the rail of the piazza and said, "Good morning, 'Merry Sunshine,' let me carry your books," and with an air of proprietorship he took my books whether or not and off he went with me to school. On bidding me adieu, at the door, he said, "I am going out in the country for a few days; may I drop in to see you some evening after I get back?"

"I am sorry, Mr. Jesse, but I never see company during the week. My studies are too hard for that, besides my mother objects."



O Dinna ask me gin I lo'e ye;
Troth I daunna tell!
Dinna ask me gin I lo'e ye,—
Ask it o' yoursel'.

—DUNLOP.

CHAPTER XXVII.

I AM NOT FAR BEHIND.

Somehow from then on I could not study without every little while thinking of Jesse. I began to wonder if he was saying the same things to the other girls he had said to me. I was in love, I felt sure, and to think I was just sixteen and never would be permitted to think about him if my mother knew of it, and I had always been candid with her in regard to my liking for young men. She wouldn't even tolerate a thought of marriage with any of the boys that she knew, much less a stranger. I was glad when the studies were over for the day and when I passed the young people at the hotel, they all began, "Say, Bettie, that young lightning rod agent is crazy about you. He had not talked of anything else up to the time he left."

"That is the truth," said the proprietor, who happened to be on the piazza at the time.

"He has the worst case of love at first sight I ever saw."

"Oh, look at her blushing, why I believe you are in love, too!"

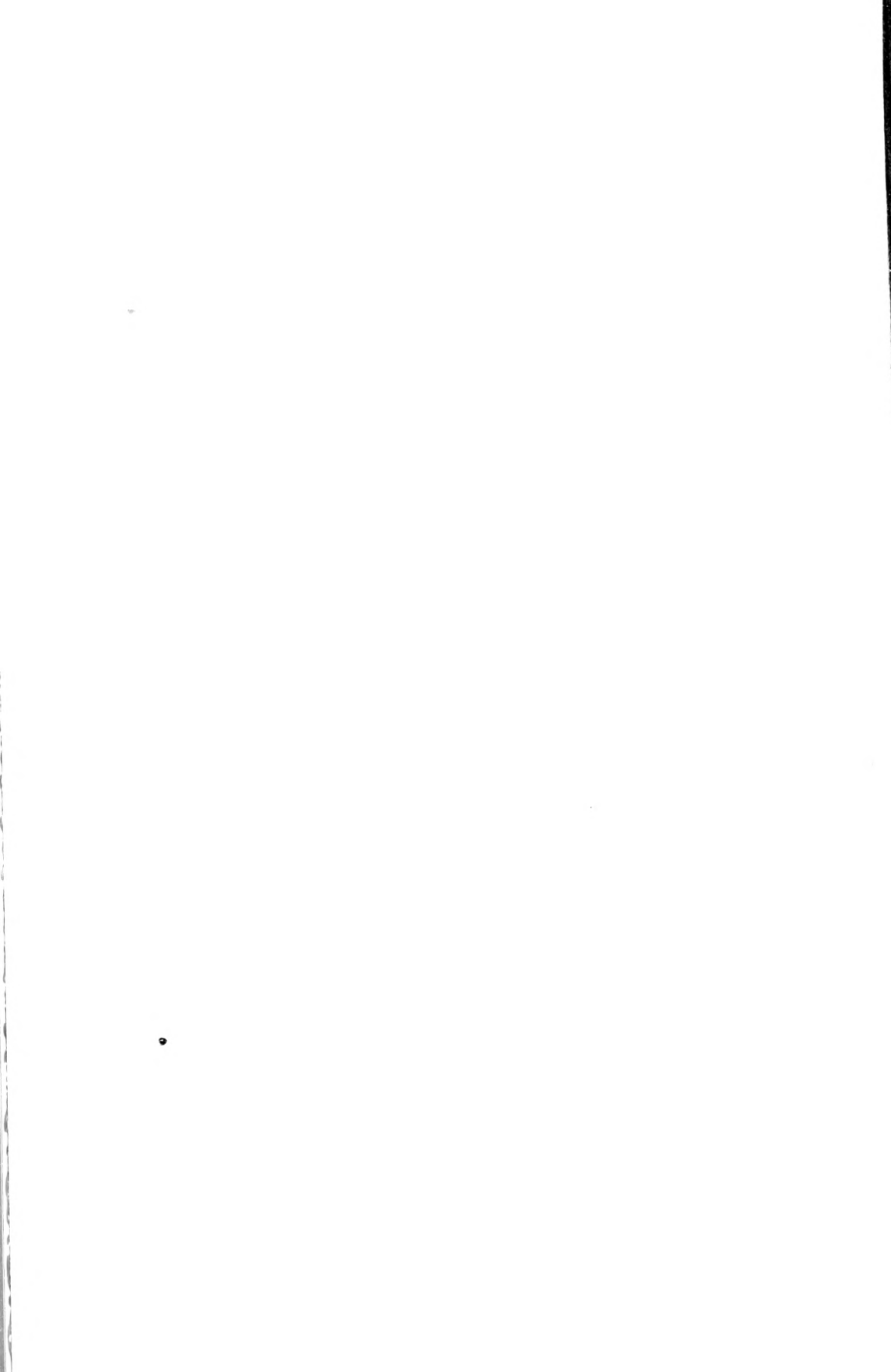
So I heard nothing else but my new beau.

After I reached home mother said, "Laura, I have

been up to Mrs. White's to-day and she was telling me that the young man Mercer, who took you to church last night, was telling the other boys they would better look to their laurels, for he was going to marry you if you would have him. Now that beats anything I ever heard of! Such children as you both are. Why, he has nothing to marry on and it is ridiculous, and you want at least two more years at school before you graduate." I colored crimson, I am sure, for there came over me a feeling that I didn't care to graduate after all the coaxing I had done to get her to spare the money for that purpose.

His nieces then came in and began, "Mrs. Lee, you will certainly lose Bettie now, for 'Uncle Jesse' says he can't live without her." Here I felt my face a blaze of fire again. "Well, he will have to live without her for a while at least." I knew every word of such talk would only make my mother more opposed to him. I tried to shut off the conversation, but in a short time it turned back to the same subject.

The days seemed interminable, and yet I ought not to want the stranger to return, but I could not help it, and hourly hoped to hear that Jesse had come back to town again. He did not return till Saturday, and soon after his arrival in town, he called to see me on his way to his sister's. I tried not to show him how glad I was to see him, and yet I am certain he did see it, for he looked more like he was certain of his ground the more he saw of me.



Tears, idle tears! I know not what they mean,
Tears, from the depth of some divine despair,
Rise in the heart, and gather to the eyes,
In looking on the happy autumn fields,
And thinking of the days that are no more.

—ALFRED TENNYSON.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

HIS DEPARTURE AND MY GRIEF.

The days flew by until Jesse had done all the work in town and had to bid goodbye to us for he was going to Fayetteville from Clayton, and then into South Carolina.

"Miss Betsey, I am going to write you," said Jesse, "will you answer my letters?"

"I think not, but I will ask my mother and Prof. White, and if they consent, I'll be glad to do so," I answered.

I asked Prof. White first. I believe there was method in it, for having gotten his consent, I had no trouble in getting my mother's. Professor, when asked, said: "I can see no harm in it, and it will be the means of helping your diction and composition."

I immediately told my mother that Mr. Mercer wanted me to answer his letters and I had asked Professor, who seemed to think it might help my composition, etc.

"Of course, if Professor White thinks it is all right, I will say nothing that will keep you from it, only I think you might learn all that from the Professor himself without having to correspond with a stranger."

"Well, Miss Betsey, won't you promise to marry me before I leave you?"

"No I can't make such a promise, for I could not keep it if I did," I replied.

"Well, remember this, I am coming back to claim you as my wife some day, so farewell and remember I'll always love you. I can't think of anything else but you. I am not fit to attend to my business, but hope when I get away I may be able to buckle on the armour again, and get to work for your sake, darling," and snatching my hand he impressed a burning kiss upon it, and as soon as he had gone I kissed the same spot.

There were hours of untold misery for me, for I felt this love for him had crowded out all desire for anything else, and yet I knew it would take years to overcome a feeling of prejudice that I saw had filled my mother's mind, due to his being so young, and a stranger too. A letter came in a few days, filled with nothing of his travels or ought else to benefit me, but his love for me, just a heart burdened with love for his child sweetheart, and all he proposed to do for making me his wife very speedily. I had so many questions asked by my mother and Professor about the style of letter that Jesse wrote I had to pretend it was not worth keeping and I had destroyed it. Soon after it another one came that did contain some news item which I took pleasure in regaling to my people.

He wrote more regularly than was necessary for a correspondence that was not intended to improve my

composition and rhetoric, for I answered his letters at intervals, and always avoided the subject of love.

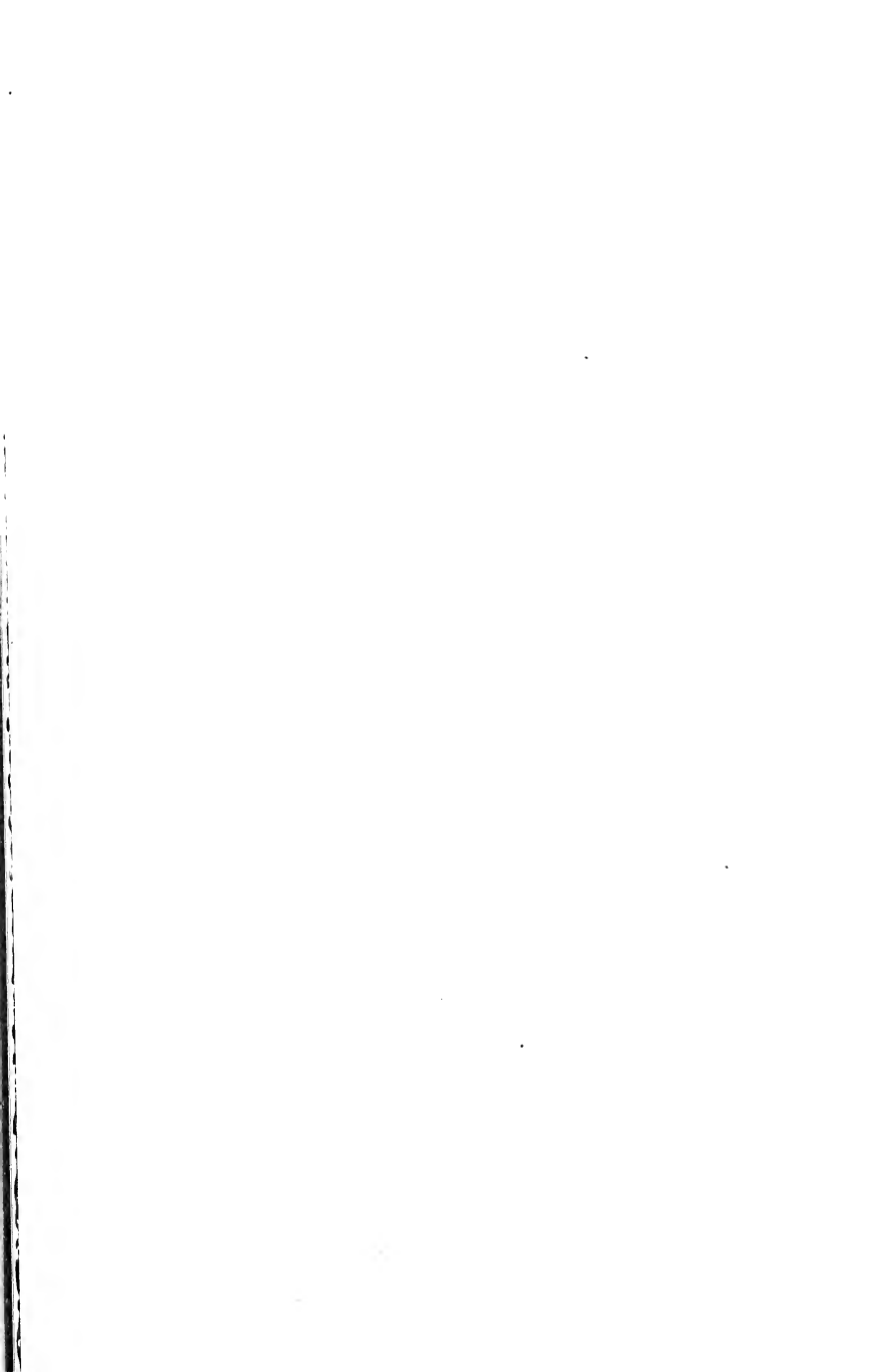
My mother still discouraged the idea of a regular correspondence with a comparative stranger, and my being only a school girl yet, made each letter I wrote a hard struggle. It did not seem right for me to want to disobey her, and I felt that this young stranger was so much a part of my future happiness that I dared not think of the future without him. As I had always been obedient, I wanted and intended to do as my mother told me, still there was a hungry feeling of love for this young man, and a craving to see him again.

My old friends and beaux continued to pay me steady attention, as if no one had ever broken in upon our serene life, yet I could not even bear the thought of their love for me, or that I ever could have cared for them. Mother had always said I was too young to think about such things, and surely she had been right, as I knew now, and if right in the past, she must be right now.

I think, however, my mother knew too much about human nature and young girls in particular to set up an opposition to him, and hoped that time and absence, those great healers of so many love lorn maidens, would do more for me than any words she might then say.

His letters continued to arrive, but I did not hurry in replying, and began trying to gradually drop the correspondence, and go on with my young friends, as though I had never met Jesse Mercer. I was deter-

mined to thoroughly test myself and know whether this feeling for a comparative stranger could be love, or was it a girlish infatuation. My heart only quickened at the mention of his name, and a nameless something spoke in every fibre of my being, that I could not love any other man, and if I did not marry him I should never marry any one. In those days a Southern girl was rarely single at twenty years of age. Many of my friends marrying as early as fourteen, and few later than seventeen.



I do not think where'er thou art,
Thou hast forgotten me;
And I, perhaps, may soothe this heart,
In thinking, too, of thee;
Yet there was round thee such a dawn
Of light ne'er seen before,
As fancy never could have drawn,
And never can restore!

—REV. CHAS. WOLFE.

CHAPTER XXIX.

HEAR RUMOR OF ENGAGEMENT TO ANOTHER GIRL.

Dr. Harrell's family all knew that Jesse was deeply in love with me and that he had asked me to marry him, that we had corresponded and that I was still going to church and parties with young Madison, who seemed to never let me miss anything for the want of an escort, and indeed was a regular visitor at our home. Ida Harrell, knowing this, and wanting to keep her uncle from being discarded, wrote and fully acquainted him with all my movements. Then Jesse not liking to hear such things, determined to give me a little of my own medicine so he wrote and told Ida that he was stopping in a town where he had met a beautiful girl, much like me, especially her eyes, and that she was a lovely musician.

Whereupon on receipt of his letter, Ida came straight to see me and tell me "that Uncle Jesse was engaged to a Miss Jennie Stewart, of South Carolina, a perfect beauty, though she has eyes like you. He just raves over her."

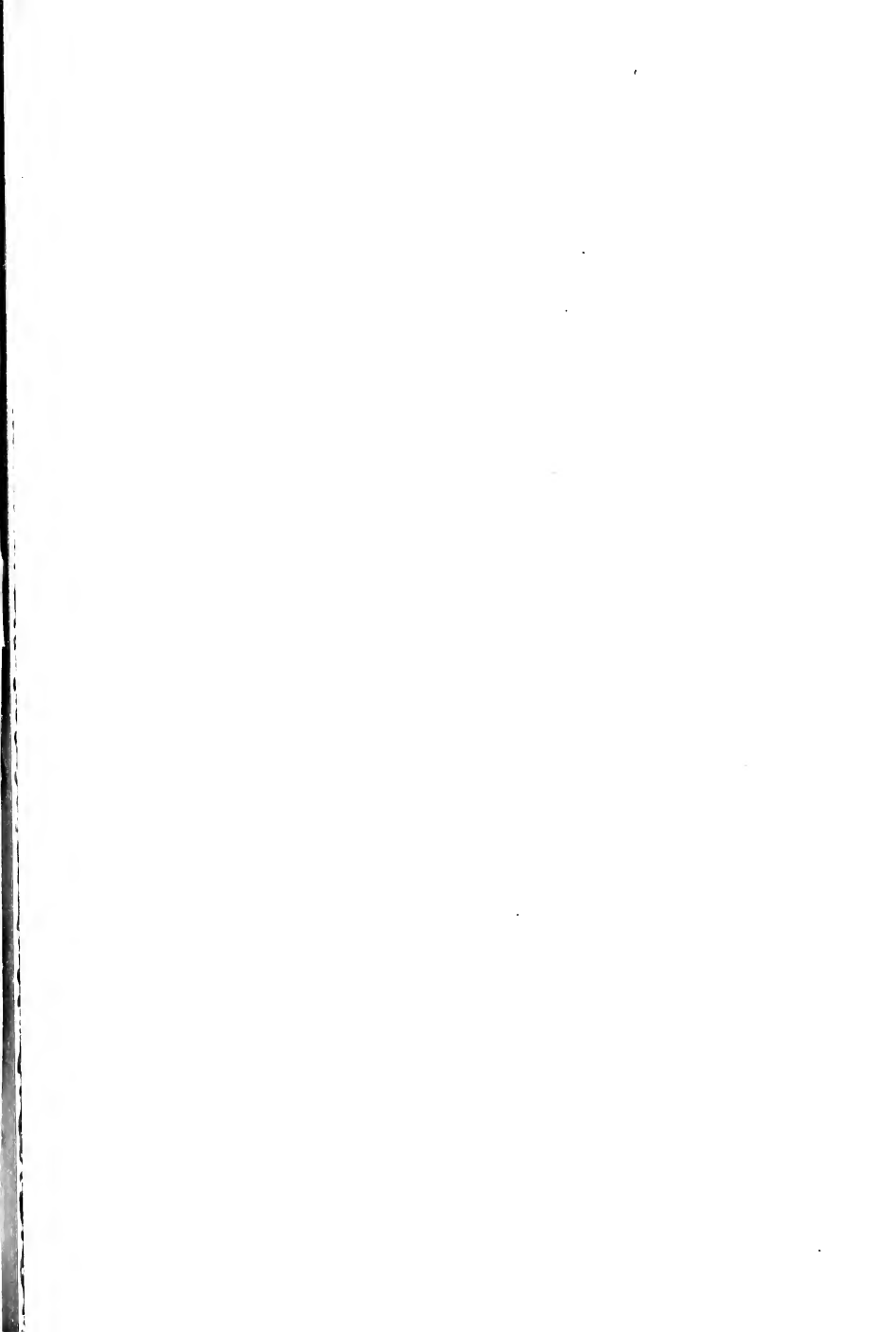
I felt a lump rising in my throat, and it was by an effort of great will power that I controlled myself, so that she might not notice it.

"I am so glad to hear it, Ida, and hope Miss Jennie

may be as good a wife as she is beautiful, don't forget to congratulate him for me," I replied.

"Well, Bettie, I am so sorry you went back on Uncle Jesse for he will make somebody a good husband, and we all thought he loved you better than anybody else."

I answered quickly, "Oh, 'somebody,' as you say, will love me just as well and make me much happier, for I couldn't bear to have him travel and leave me at home, as the lightning rod business demands."



Oh! hadst thou never shared my fate,
More dark that fate would prove,
My heart were truly desolate,
Without thy soothing love.
But thou has suffered for my sake,
Whilst this relief I found,
Like fearless lips that strive to take
The poison from a wound.
My fond affection thou hast seen,
Then judge of my regret,
To think more happy thou hadst been,
If we had never met!
And has that thought been shared by thee?
Ah, no! that smiling cheek,
Proves more unchanging love for me,
Than laboured words could speak.

THOMAS HAYNES BAYLEY.

CHAPTER XXX.

I AM VERY UNHAPPY.

That night I retired early and wept so bitterly at hearing of his love for another girl, that I well nigh made myself sick. Surely now, I knew that my mother was right, and knew more of the ways of young men than I did. After a struggle to give him up or not, for I felt that just a line from me might change all this, I called my pride to my aid and said, "No, never will I drop him another line, unless he makes the overture first. If he can so easily love another girl, after his protestations of undying affection for me in such a short time, I can crush down the feeling I have for him and simply look upon him as one dead, the memory of whom would be as an oasis in my darkest hours."

Ida constantly heard from him and never failed to tell me of his continued stay in this town where Miss Stewart lived.

I had the happy faculty then of adjusting myself to my surroundings as young people usually do. Sometimes on Sunday afternoons I had as many as fifteen young men to see me at the same time. They were not all suitors by any means, but I seemed to be the kind of a girl who could talk to them all and

no one seem to be the favorite. Why should I not be able to do that, when the one I dared not now love was still the one that would have been the favorite if, ah, that dreadful "if."

In the year following my first meeting, when the horses brought to him "Bess and luck," as he termed it, a large party of twenty young people were invited to visit the State Fair at Wilmington, guests of a house party of one of my friends. Richard Madison was there, my gallant chevalier, and was so devoted that his relatives thought we were engaged, and teased us accordingly. I was trying to learn to love him, for he was a bright, promising young scion of a good family, but I never could get the consent of mind to think I loved him well enough to marry him. When I analyzed my feelings there was something that insistently told me not to promise to marry him, as much as he urged; but wait, that Jesse still loved me. He had quit writing, and I never heard where he was or what he was doing, but after our party left for the Fair I was informed by my mother that Jesse Mercer had been in town and was greatly disappointed at finding me away. When I heard that he, my own boy lover had been back to see me, even though I was absent, I felt so happy that I wanted to sing for joy.

I began to see things in a rosy color again, and down in my innermost soul I felt that all was not over between us two, that he would surely come back.

In a few weeks this came to pass. Richard Madison had taken me to Liberty Church to hear a revivalist.

Instead of listening to the sermon the young people usually sat in the grove and chatted, and ate lunch of fruit or watermelon. The young men sat in the buggies with the girls that they had taken, and if these couples were oftener thinking of what the young men said, than what the preacher had, it is not to be wondered at. While Richard and I were thus occupied, I heard a voice that thrilled me, and on looking up, there stood Jesse Mercer beside me. The same bright, cheerful smile radiating on all around, just as before. Richard, of course, hated him too much to offer his seat beside me, so finally Jesse said, "I just stopped over from train to train and must catch the 1 p. m. express for Charlotte, a pressing business meeting calling me there tomorrow."

Upon hearing this Richard thought his horse was untied, and stepped to his head to adjust the bridle. Jesse spoke low to me and said:

"Miss Betsey, promise me not to marry until I see you again." I cheerfully answered, "I have no idea of such a thing and I'll promise."

He grasped my hand and looked into my eyes and said "Goodbye." I read a message then in his eyes, that the love that I had thought dead was kindled into a fierce flame. Surely he read the same in my telltale blushes. He left me in body, but in spirit he was near me, waking or sleeping, my boy lover was near me and loved *me*, not Jennie Stewart. How could I ever have thought he did not love me? Just a word of idle chatter of his niece, who was trying to find out if I loved him and if he loved me. I

read it all then, and knew that Ida meant to be a real friend to us both. I was glad to bid Richard goodbye at our gate and run to my room, where I permitted myself to think how much I was beloved and how little I deserved it after months of doubt and jealousy.

Suddenly I remembered in my happiness my mother's unhappiness, if she only knew all this, and then came a feeling of my disobedience to her and regret that it was so, but I would not alter anything, even though my mother would be unhappy. I must love my stranger lover, though the whole world opposed it, for he was no stranger to me, but a part of me, a something so near and dear to me that life itself would not be worth living without him. I pondered deeply on the one thing I had wanted so much to do, to continue my studies till I could graduate, now I thought why I'd make my mother just as miserable by leaving her to go off to school, as if I were leaving her to marry the one man in all the world for me.

I could not concentrate my mind on books, and problems in geometry were not necessary to make my boy lover happy as he often told me.

A few weeks after Jesse had come and gone again so suddenly, I was down at Nealie's home, for her two little children helped me to put out of my constant thought the being whom I so loved. Nell and Charlie made me forget myself in them whether I wanted to or not. Nealie always so willing to help me, now seemed to need my constant companionship, my mother having told her what she thought of my feelings to-

wards Jesse. One day at her home a little colored boy whom my sister had sent up town on an errand came running at the top of his speed and breathlessly called to me, "Oh, Miss Bettie, your true lover have came!" Thinking he meant some of my friends from about town, I did not reply, but running up to me, his big eyes bulging, "Shore now 'fore de Lawd, Miss Bettie, your true lover have came," he insisted. Finally I said in the most indifferent manner, "What is the name of 'my true lover,' and where did he 'came' from?"

"Miss Harrell's brudder that has got de circus wagon." Hearing that much I ran home without waiting to hear anything else. My heart was beating so hard, it seemed to almost burst its bounds. I went to my room, added a few touches to my toilet, but determined to look as much like Jesse had surprised me as possible, if he should drop in to see me.

O, have I lived or have I loved,
In any years before?
For now I cannot dream of joy,
Save with him evermore.
I would and would not, love and fear,
Make up so large a sum
Within my foolish heart today,
The heart that he has won.
O, lavish lights and floating shades,
I would you were no more;
Fly down and haunt the midnight glades,
And tell me day is o'er.
Dear joy, keep my secret safe;
Like him you cannot guess;
That life and love are centered here,
Where I have written—"Yes."

CHAPTER XXXI.

OUR ENGAGEMENT.

It was a bright sunny day in March, and our front door stood open. My mother called me and said, "I have a piece of machine work I want you to do for me, Laura."

"Very well," I answered, and going into the room where she was preparing the work, I sat down to sew the garment. She was busy at the table basting, and I was running the old "Howe," such a noisy machine that it drowned out every other noise. Finally feeling a presence near me, I looked up, and there stood my boy-lover in the doorway smiling at me.

That I was greatly embarrassed does not really express my feeling, and I have no idea how I managed to greet him or what I did.

"Well, Mrs. Lee, you must excuse me for my seeming rudeness, I did knock on the front door, so loud I thought I'd wake the 'seven sleepers,' but I heard the noise of the sewing machine and knew you could not hear my knocking, and so took the liberty to walk in the open door."

He sat down beside me, and we chatted between the pieces of sewing my mother continued to hand over to me. We were sitting talking in one of those

intervals, when Jesse took from his pocket a pencil and envelope, for my mother kept her back to us, while basting at the table, and writing a few words handed it back to me. I felt what was coming and read these words, "Will you be my wife? I must know now, answer 'yes' and make me the happiest man alive."

I took the pencil and nervously wrote, fearing my mother would turn around and see me thus engaged, "I would say 'yes' if I thought you wanted to hear it."

Then stealing my hand, he pressed it to his lips. Before I could arrest him from what I saw was coming he said:

"Mrs. Lee, I have just asked your daughter to be my wife, and she has made me the happiest of men by saying 'Yes.'"

I saw my mother clutch the table for support, and turning said to me, "Laura, you surely do not mean it?"

I faltered, "Yes, mother, I do mean it."

"Why you are too young, and not through school, I cannot think of letting you marry now, and Mr. Mercer is a stranger, too. You have not thought what your promise means," she said.

"Mrs. Lee, I know that you are right in wishing to see your daughter well settled in life, and my vocation now is not to my own thinking as respected as I intend for my future business to be. My trips lately have been to confer with some men in St. Louis, where we have decided to open up a manufacturing chemists laboratory and where we shall manufacture medicines for the medical profession to use. There is a fortune

in it, I am convinced, I have some money I have saved from the business I am now engaged in, and I have arranged to form a company and begin life in a live western city, where we will be centrally located for supplying the United States."

"Then you will make St. Louis your home," murmured my mother.

"Yes, that is my intention, our family have never recuperated since losing the negroes, and I am not willing to drag along for years eking out a bare existence, when I can make a fortune by going West."

Turning to me, my mother said sadly, "Child, do you realize what this means, leaving your family and friends and going among a wild people, living, almost, I hear, on the frontier, with Indians almost at their door? Mr. Mercer, she is my baby, and has always been the pet of the whole family, it is true she has never disobeyed me in any matter that she was requested to do, and I have tried to keep from imposing anything unreasonable on her. Now you have put me to the test to give her, my baby, into your keeping, without knowing much of your character, disposition, etc. Not only do you ask for her to be given to you, but you tell me that you will take her to a far away home, where possibly we may seldom, if ever, see each other again."

I loved my mother more dearly for every word she said. I knew her inmost feelings were love for me.

I was trembling with suppressed emotion, my love for my mother in the scale with the love for my boy-lover, my hero, my life. I could not leave the room,

much as I wanted to, for I felt that all my happiness was at stake, and I must hear every word for and against the match.

Jesse's eyes filled with tears, as he said, "I love your daughter, and have loved her from the first moment of meeting her, better than everything this world contains. Since meeting her I have tried to delude myself into the belief that it was a boyish infatuation for a pretty girl, but no, my heart goes out to her with every fibre of my being, and I can't give her up. She loves me, and has always loved me, she has tried to drown it with thoughts of others, but she can't any more do that than I can turn the current of my love for her into another channel. We were made for each other, and I am determined to win her, if it takes years to prove my loyalty to her."

Mother had sat down at the beginning of the conversation, and now and then she would so fill up with tears that she could not talk. I sat like a little criminal awaiting the verdict. Finally my mother said:

"Mr. Mercer, will you give me till tomorrow to think and talk over what is right and proper to do? I live for my children, she is my baby, the only unmarried one, and feels nearer than the other children who are away. I want to do what will make her permanently happy. If you think she is so much in love with you I want to find it out, for, so far, I had thought she was fascinated for the moment, and after your visit to South Carolina had gotten over it entirely.

"There is another thing, Laura has no musical talent, can't even carry a tune that any one knows. Now,

much of your happy home life will be in having a congenial wife, one who enters into all your tastes, nothing makes home life unhappier than uncongeniality. Think well, Mr. Mercer, what you are doing, every young man who falls in love thinks he wants a wife until he gets one, and then he finds out he needs everything else but a wife."

Jesse arose to leave and said, "Mrs. Lee, the girls want me to bring Miss Betsey down to the house tonight, we are going to have some music, may I come up and take her to sister Ann's?"

"Certainly," my mother said, "I would not for one moment debar her from an evening's enjoyment."

After he left mother asked me many questions, why I had not told her that I loved Jesse.

"I felt, mother, that you would never approve it, and I could no more help loving him than I could help breathing," I said.

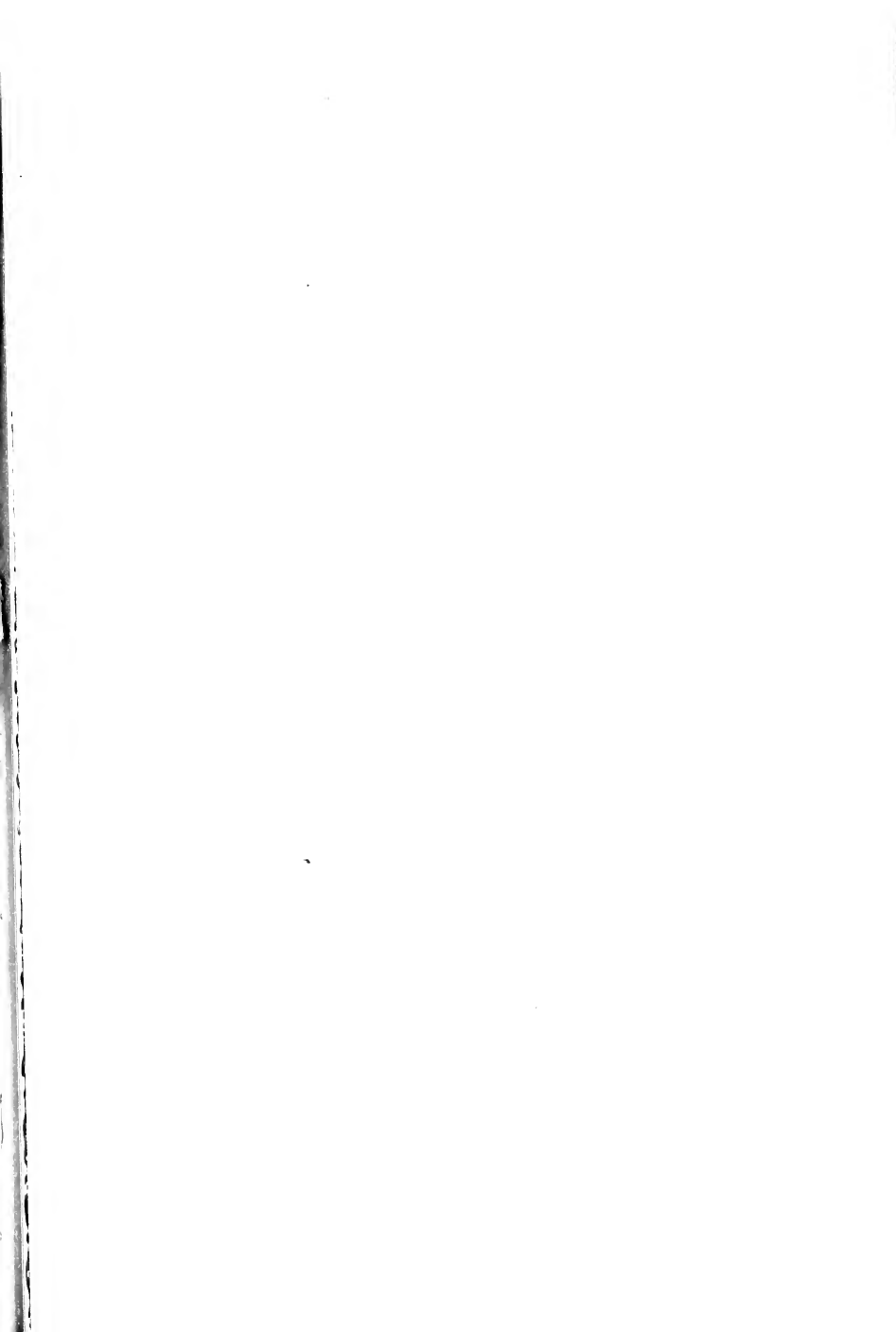
"Well, I will go down to see your sister Cornelia and Ashley tonight and talk over the matter with them," mother said.

I went to her and stroking her pretty wavy hair, now so streaked with grey, said, "Mother, I love you even more than I ever did, and don't want to disobey you, so please don't make it too hard for me."

She kissed me and said, "I am only thinking of your future happiness."

That night I dressed in my most becoming dress, a white dotted swiss with pink ribbon bows and sash, and when Jesse came for me, he said, "Miss Betsey, you look sweet enough to eat."

We went to the party at sister Ann's, and such a good time we all had, that when time came to go home I had forgotten that my happiness had been weighed in the balance all the evening and might be found wanting tomorrow. Jesse could play the banjo a little better than anybody I had ever heard before, the old fashioned negro melodies and rag time, long before rag time came into fashion.



Which this railway smash reminds me in an underhanded
way,
Of a lightning-rod dispenser that came down on me one day.
My wife—she liked the stranger, smilin' on him warm and
sweet;
(It al'ays flatters women when their guests are on the eat!)
And he hinted that some ladies never lose their youthful
charm,
And caressed her yearlin' baby, and received it in his arms.
My sons and daughters liked him—for he had progressive
views,
And he chewed the cud o' fancy, and gi'n down the latest
news;
And I couldn't help but like him—as I fear I al'ays must,
The gold of my own doctrines in a fellow-heap o' dust,

—WILL CARLETON.

CHAPTER XXXII.

ONE EVENING'S ENTERTAINMENT.

The Clayton string band was ushered in soon after we arrived at Mrs. Harrell's home. The young men who composed it, were from the finest old families in the county. The McCullers brothers, five in number, were among the aristocrats of Clayton, and considered with the Poole boys to be the best musicians in the state for amateurs.

Delino McCullers and William were first violinists, and their touch was so sweet that they could always awaken the most responsive chords in the hearts of their hearers.

Edgar and Donas played second violin and the violin cello in such a masterful way that the low notes re-echoed even more melody than the first violinists could evoke.

Herbert McCullers, one of the handsomest of the brothers, as well as one of the best musicians, usually played the guitar, even as a Spanish Cavalier might do in sunny Spain.

Then came Coy Poole and his brothers, Quentin and Nathan, who seemed to be able to play on any instrument, and in the most pleasing style. It was like a pleasant dream to be awakened in the middle of the

night and listen to a serenade from these young geniuses who played as professionals might have envied.

Still, on this particular evening their talents did not shine out as formerly, for Jesse, himself a lover of music from the most classical to rag time, could play with such a dash and with his whole soul, that even the banjo played by him seemed like a wonderful instrument in his hands, while the piano seemed attuned to higher bursts of melody than ever before under his touch. Nature had been no niggard with him when she committed all these talents to his keeping, for his beautiful tenor voice would have been a generous and gracious gift to any person, yet he was capable of getting and giving more pleasure with all these gifts than any other artist I ever knew.

We made merry till late. Among the other accomplishments that he developed that evening was the telling of stories that were so original, that I have never forgotten them; indeed no good wife should ever forget her husband's stories. One of these will do more to show the reader the kind of material this young man was made of than any words I might say about him, perhaps in the dark days that came to us, there arose in my mind the picture of the young lightning rod expert as he planned and sold Mr. Stewart the much abused lightning rods. I foresaw his determination to win me as he won the bet. I shall tell these stories in the very words he told them.

THE CLOCK STORY.

In Robeson County, near Lumberton, North Carolina, a little town in the eastern part of the state, there are at least a dozen families of Scotch descent, some of them live in the little town, some of them live on farms a mile or two from town. All of these people are very thrifty, they work hard and save their money, and all of them have money in the bank.

Along in 1871 and 1872 a clock company was working through this section of the state. The salesmen of the company were reaping a harvest, selling a clock with a pretty case. The clock was also what is called a calendar clock; that is, it would tell the day of the month. These clocks were sold at thirty-nine dollars apiece. The company selling these clocks was very accommodating, and the salesmen were instructed that whenever they found a man who owned his home and wanted a clock, they, the salesmen, were to sell it for cash if he could get the cash, but if the cash was short, the clock must be sold on credit, and a note must be taken, giving from one month to one year's time to pay for same.

The salesmen were all young men, full of fun and frolic, but very good workers. There was a great rivalry between the salesmen as to which one could sell the greatest number of clocks. When nearly everybody in the neighborhood had secured a clock and the company was getting ready to move over into another county, all the salesmen met at this little town of Lumberton to turn over to the superintendent all

the cash that they could spare, reserving only enough to pay current expenses. Also to turn over the notes taken for the clocks that they had sold on credit. This was the business part of the meeting, but the meeting meant a great deal more to these young fellows, for each and every one was delighted to get to a town. The size of the town mattered little to them, only the bigger the town the better they liked it.

At these meetings every one had some experience to relate in connection with their trips through the county. Each one would brag on the number of clocks that he had sold, and relate some little particular incident about how he would overcome the difficulties, as well as the scruples of his customers, and told how he sold the clock to his man, whether the man wanted a clock or not. In fact each one would feel as if he had sustained a personal injury if he failed to sell a clock to every man that he went to see. So it got to be a sort of a disgrace for a man to come and report that he had been baffled in a single instance and had failed to sell his clock to his man.

At this meeting the stories had come thick and fast, nearly all telling of success, and not a single instance had as yet been related where failure must be recorded, till Billy Colver, spoke up and said:

"Well, boys, I am not going to be as big a liar as some of you, I am going to tell the truth. There is a man living out on the Shoeheel road that I spent a half day with, I thought three or four times that I had sold him a clock, but when I got ready to close

the deal my man would back out, so I have to report this one failure, and I want to add that my man told me I was the fourth man who had been to see him during the week, so there are three more of you fellows who could report at least this one failure if you only had the backbone to do it."

Another salesman said, "I confess I am one of the other three who failed in this case."

So the other two not to be outdone in candor, also confessed their inability to sell this particular man.

The first speaker, Mr. Colver, said, "boys, this will never do, we must not let such a story as this go back to headquarters. This Mr. McClean must buy a clock, but the question is, how can it be done?"

After much talk it was agreed that Tim Rowland, the youngest and handsomest of all the salesmen, should go and sell a clock to Mr. McClean. Tim had a great reputation as a salesman, and he had sold clocks to almost every man that he had visited. Tim did not like the idea of going to see Mr. McClean after four other salesmen had failed, for he said that a stubborn man, after once refusing to buy, would be much more obstinate than before he was approached.

He wanted to know if Mr. McClean was married. One of the boys spoke up and said that Mr. McClean had a very sweet, mild-mannered little wife, but she was so modest and retiring that he did not remember to have heard her say one word while he was at Mr. McClean's house.

Tim said if he could only go to the house and find Mr. McClean absent he was almost sure that he could

sell Mrs. McClean a clock. The next morning, early, one of the salesmen went to Tim's room and said, "Now is your time to sell the clock to Mrs. McClean, Tim, for I just saw Mr. McClean over on the Court House square."

So Tim hurried through his breakfast and started off on his wagon, which was loaded with clocks, for Mr. McClean's house to try to sell a clock to his wife. He drove out of his way to approach Mr. McClean's house from the opposite direction, so that when he arrived at the house his horse would be headed towards Lumberton.

In an hour or two he found himself in the road in front of Mr. McClean's house. He walked boldly in and knocked on the front door. He stood a little while, and receiving no response, he knocked again, a little louder than before, still receiving no response he knocked again, louder still.

This time he heard some movement inside the house, and waited patiently for an answer to his knock. At last a young woman made her appearance. She had her sleeves rolled up above her elbows and she was rolling them down to hide her naked arms. She had on a sunbonnet, which completely hid her face, except in front, and a skirt to the bonnet covered her neck and part of her shoulders. As soon as he could, Tim spoke in his sweetest tones.

He pulled off his hat and kept it in his hand while he talked. He said, "Good morning, Madam, is Mr. McClean at home? I am very sorry for I am in trouble and I was going to ask a favor of Mr. McClean.

You see my wagon is broken down and I must leave my load of boxes somewhere, so I can go to town with my empty wagon to get it mended. Do you think Mr. McClean would object if I would put my boxes under the porch or in the barn, any where, so they could keep dry? O! thank you, you are so kind. What a beautiful place you have! I think the outlook from this porch is one of the most beautiful that I ever saw. That landscape is pretty enough to make an artist want to live and die right in sight of so much beauty. O! if I only had such a home and a pretty little girl I saw about ten miles from here, for my wife, I would be the happiest mortal on the earth. What is her name, did you ask? Oh, such a sweet name; I expect you know her so I must not tell you her name. I have only seen her once, but I fell in love at first sight. O, I tell you she is the most beautiful being I ever saw, such lovely eyes, and the sweetest mouth. Why if I had a wife with a mouth like that, I would spend about half of my time kissing her. Her hair, Oh, you just ought to see that hair, that hair was as fine as silk. She tried to tie it up on the back of her head, but the hair would not stand for such treatment, so it just broke out and was hanging all around her beautiful neck. Color, why I can't exactly tell, sometimes I thought it was black, when she would sit in the shadow, but as soon as she would come out where the light would fall on it, it would look like it was on fire, there was so much red in it. When I got real close to her it did not look red, it was brown. So I guess I must call it a reddish

brown. You say you know her, now look here, is she some of your kin folks? She looks enough like you to be your sister. Pardon me, pardon me, for keeping you so long. You really reminded me so much of Miss Mary! There, I have 'let the cat out of the bag'! Well what difference does it make, I know you will not tell on me. You will be my friend, won't you? I am going to work hard and I will marry Mary some day, if she will have me."

Then Tim went out to his wagon and commenced bringing his boxes in and putting them on the porch. When he had nearly all of the boxes in, he looked at Mrs. McClean. She was standing there smiling and watching every movement. Tim looked up with a smile on his face and asked, "Will you please tell me what time it is? What! Have no clock? Why, that is the worst I ever heard of, to live away out in the country and have no clock. Why, just to think that every one of those boxes has a clock in it. I will just put one on your mantel to keep you company while I am gone to town. What do you say, your husband will be angry? He don't want a clock? Four clock men been here? Then he would not buy, that is funny. He said that if a clock man came here while he was gone you must slam the door in his face? Why, what sort of a man is he? Has he a watch? Yes, well you see he don't need a clock himself, he has a watch. He is away in the field plowing, he looks at his watch, it is dinner time. He comes on home to dinner, you have no watch, no clock, you don't know the time, and dinner is not quite ready. He is impa-

tient; you say, 'I would have had your dinner ready, I have no clock, I did not know it was dinner time.' What, you say this has happened many times? Now that is too bad. Look here, I tell you what I will do, I want to sell you this clock." Tim had put the clock on the mantel and started it to work. It only lacked a few minutes to twelve o'clock. As Tim was talking the clock struck twelve. Tim said, "Now, that is what I call real music, ain't that the sweetest gong you ever heard? Look at that clock, it is a thing of beauty and a joy forever. I don't know anything anybody can put in a home that will give it so much pleasure as a clock! There it stands to speak to you every time you look at it, and it tells you something that you want to know every time it speaks, and the beauty is that it never talks back to you. It never gets impatient. It is always in a good humor, and it helps the other members of the family to keep in a good humor, too. All during the night, in sickness or in health, there it stands with open face and a kind look, to remind you of all your duties. It tells you when to go to bed, it tells you when to get up, it tells when it is time to get breakfast, dinner and supper; it tells you when to take the next dose of medicine, it tells you when to go to church. In the weary hours of the long winter nights you wake up and lay there hour after hour and wonder what time it is." There the clock stands to mark off for you the hours as they pass. Now I will tell you what I will do, I am going to make you a proposition that any sensible person would accept, and I know

that you are a sensible person. Now I will sell you that clock at your own price and will take anything you have to sell at your own price, could any proposition be made more attractive than that; now what do you say?"

There was absolute silence for about five minutes. Mrs. McClean was smiling, with a puzzled look on her face, as if she was trying to comprehend what had been said to her.

At last she said simply, "I will accept your proposition. Come down here to this pen and I will show you something." She took Tim out in the corner of the yard where there was a small pen. On the floor of the pen, was a very poor sick looking calf. Mrs. McClean said, "I will let you have that calf for five dollars." She then took Tim out to the barn, and said "There is a barrel with some flax seed in it, I will let you have the barrel and the seed for three dollars. Now come to the house and we will finish our trading." When she got to the house she motioned Tim to be seated, and went off in another room, and soon returned with two silver dollars in her hand. She handed them to Tim and said, "You said I could have the clock at my own price. Well, I'll give you ten dollars for the clock. You said you would take anything I had to sell at my own price in pay for the clock. So I give you the calf at five dollars, the flax seed at three dollars, this makes eight dollars and the two dollars I give you makes the ten dollars, and I hope it will satisfy you for I have nothing else to sell."

Tim assured her that he was perfectly satisfied, and

said further, that he wished to beg her pardon for having used a subterfuge to get an audience. He said he had come from town especially to sell her the clock, and now that she had bought one if she would only forgive him for telling her a story about his wagon being broken down he would get his calf, his seed and the balance of his clocks, and with heartfelt thanks for her kindness he would bid her good day. Saying also that if he got along well with the beautiful Mary, that he had mentioned, that he hoped to see her again some day.

Putting all his things together, he was soon on his wagon and on his way back to town. Tim was wondering what his friends would say about his selling a \$39.00 clock for \$10.00. Then he remembered that Mrs. McClean said the calf's mother was a fine milk cow, so he said, I may get a good price for the calf. Then his mind took in the flax seed. Well, "by George," I will sell them too. So when he got to town he had all his plans made. He went to the Court House and asked the sheriff if he could sell some flax seed and a fine Jersey calf. The sheriff readily gave his permission. So Tim loafed around till Court adjourned for the day, and as he saw the people come out of the Court House, he mounted his wagon and commenced hollowing at the top of his voice, "Oh, yes, O! ye-s, O, yes, come this way! come this way! Now gentlemen, I want to offer you something that they tell me will bring you the most prolific crop and make you more money than anything that you can cultivate, will make you more money than anything

you can plant in this country. I am telling you that this thing that I am going to offer you will grow as fast and do as well in this country as it will in any country. If this is true what a wonderful country this will be in a few years! Why, you will be so rich you will not have to work any more, you will have nothing to do but live on the interest of your money. Now, gentlemen, you have heard of the Norway flax, the most wonderful flax in the world. This flax is as fine as silk and grows as high as your head. I am told that it will yield one hundred per cent. every year, just think of it, one hundred per cent. per year! Now I have only a very limited quantity of this flax seed; it is so scarce I will have to charge you one dollar for a large spoonful. Now who will take a spoonful at one dollar? You? Thank you; and you? thank you;" and so Tim went on till he had sold fifty-five spoonfuls. When he saw his crowd leaving Tim said, "now, gentlemen, I had flax seed for many of you, but I have sold it all. Now I have one more thing to sell. This one thing only one man can get, and the man who gets this one thing, that I now offer you, in a year or so will be the proudest man in this country. Now I offer you this imported Jersey calf. This is the finest stock ever brought to the United States from the Island of Jersey. This is a cow calf and came from the biggest and best milking family of cows ever owned on earth. Why, gentlemen, I am told that the mother of this calf gave five gallons of milk a day. That the father of this calf gave five gallons of milk a day, that the grandmother

of this calf gave five gallons of milk a day, and the grandfather gave five gallons of milk a day. Now, how much am I offered? \$10.00, \$15.00, \$20.00, \$30.00, \$35.00, \$40.00, \$45.00, \$50.00, \$50.00, \$50.00, going at \$50.00, can't you give me \$5.00 more? \$50.00, \$50.00, \$50.00, make it five, \$55.00. Now, gentlemen, don't lose this bargain. I am going to sell, going, going, once going, \$55.00, \$55.00, \$55.00, \$55.00, going twice, going, going, last call, are you all done, \$55.00, third and last call, and sold to that gentleman over there at \$55.00. Now, gentlemen, accept my thanks for your kindness." After getting his money Tim drove off.

The scene shifts and goes back to the McClean farm. Mrs. McClean was greatly pleased that she had succeeded in buying a clock, and was more than pleased that she could pay for it with the calf that Mr. McClean was so anxious to get rid of, in fact had said that if the calf lived another day that he intended to kill it. He also spoke of the flax seed, saying that they were worm eaten and were worthless, and he intended to throw them away. So she had only paid out two dollars in real money, and she just considered that she got the beautiful clock for two dollars. But there was a sting in the whole transaction, and this made her a little sad. The thing that worried her was the fact that if a clock man came to his house while he was away, she was to slam the door in his face and go on about her business.

What could she say when her husband came home? So she must have thought of something to say or to

do, for she went hurriedly out to the barn and got some corn in a bucket, came back in the yard and commenced to call the chickens. She shelled the corn and threw it to the chickens. She dropped the corn nearer and nearer to herself till she was dropping the corn right at her feet. The chickens crowded around her closer and closer. She looked them over well, and reached down and picked up a nice half grown young rooster, there was one squawk and a little whirl of the arm and the chicken was fluttering on the ground with its head off. In a little while she was on her way to the house with the chicken. She cleaned it, cut it up and put it aside, after sprinkling it over with salt. She got out her flour and made some biscuits, she got out some potatoes and cleaned them, she got out some rice, washed it, shook up her fire in the cooking stove and started cooking supper. She would stop her work once in a while and go in and look at her clock. John would be coming along soon. So she sat and watched down the road. She got her table set and put a clean table cloth on. She made the table look as nice as if she was looking for company. She got out some preserved peaches and made some pie crust out of her biscuit dough, putting in a little butter to make it short and crisp.

Everything was now ready. It commenced to turn dark. She lighted her lamps, sat down and waited; at last she heard the rattle of chains and the snap of the wagon wheels, the patter of horses' feet. She knew John was coming, maybe it was some other farmer on his way home from the town. What could

keep John so late? Yes, it was John, he had turned in and gone down towards the barn. She thought that it took him a long time to get through with his horses. She went in and took another look at the clock, then went over the bureau and looked at herself in the glass. She thought she looked a little paler than usual. She smoothed her hair and went back to the kitchen. Yes, there was John coming at last. What would he say? John came on in, walked over to a shelf where there was a bucket of water, a wash basin and a fresh towel hanging on the rack. He washed his hands.

His wife was watching him; as soon as she saw him giving his hands the finishing touches with the towel, she said in her sweetest tones, "Come right in John, I know you must be tired, and I have a nice warm supper for you. Here is some nice fried chicken that I know you love, and some nice hot biscuit that ought to be mighty good, because I put some good work on them."

John threw up his head and took a good look at his wife. He was wondering what made his wife so nice and pleasant tonight. She rambled on asking him about the town, asking about the news, handing him more chicken, more biscuits, more coffee. She kept him busy. All of a sudden there was the clock striking in the other room. John asked "What is that?" The wife said "go on, John, and finish your supper and I will tell you all about it." John with his brows knit with a fierce look in his face, said "all about what?"

“Go on John and finish your supper and I will tell you all about it. Go on John, now please finish your supper and don’t get mad about it. It is nothing to get mad about. Now please go on and finish your supper.”

John said, “what did I tell you? Didn’t I tell you if any clock man came here while I was gone that you must slam the door in his face and go on about your business?” “Now, John.” “Didn’t I tell you that? Now you have gone and disobeyed me, is that the way for a wife to treat her husband?”

“Now, please, John,” said the wife in pleading tones. But John could see only one side and kept on. At last there came a gray look around the wife’s mouth, the face turned a little paler, she was trying to swallow something. She got up out of her chair and said, “yes, you miserable wretch, you don’t deserve even the little consideration that I have for you. You talk to me about disobedience! Why, you stingy cuss, I have been your obedient slave. Here I have cooked all your meals for two years, I have mended all your old ragged clothes for two years, fed your chickens, milked your cows, fed your hogs, you miserable man you! I get up early and go to bed late to get through the work that you should hire somebody to help do. Talk to me about obedience! You don’t know how to treat a decent woman. You are too stingy. You go off to the field with your watch in your pocket, when you feel a little hungry you look at your watch and say, ‘Yes, it is dinner time, I will go home to

dinner!' Here I am with no watch, no clock, don't know what time it is, and must guess the time to get my dinner; you come home, dinner is a few minutes late, you want to know what is the matter with the dinner. There is nothing the matter with the dinner, the matter is *with you*, you miserable stingy thing you. That's what is the matter I can tell you, and I can tell you something else; I can tell you that you can get somebody else to cook for you, for I will not live with a man so mean and stingy. You remember you said you intended to kill that sick calf. Well, I sold that calf for five dollars. Do you remember that barrel of worm eaten flax seed, that you were going to throw away? I sold it for three dollars and I took the last money I had on earth and gave it with the calf and the flax seed for the clock. You knew that I wanted a clock, and you were too stingy to buy one for me, and I am now done with you. Tomorrow I will go home to my mother."

About this time John was laughing so he could hardly stand up. The wife said "What are you laughing at? I don't see anything to laugh at." John put his hand in his pocket and brought out a package wrapped in a piece of newspaper. He said, "My dear wife, you are the smartest wife in the world! I am the darn fool. Here is a package of the same flax seed and I paid one dollar for it. I have the calf down yonder in my wagon, and I paid fifty-five dollars for the measly thing."

MR. PEEL'S CURIOSITY.

Down in Eastern North Carolina there is a railroad from Weldon to Wilmington, a part now of the Atlantic Coast Line. This road passes through many little towns. Among others, there is a little town down near Wilmington called Burgaw. It is not much of a town. It has one store, one church, one blacksmith shop, one turpentine distillery, one cotton gin, one saw mill, one boarding house, which the owner calls a hotel. The proprietor of this hotel is a very unique character. He has the reputation of having more curiosity than any man in the whole state. It has been said about him that when a stranger came to town Mr. Peel (for this was his name), would quit his business and follow him around and listen to everything that he would say, so that he could guess, by what he heard, who the stranger was, what was his name, where he came from, how long he intended to stay, and where he was going when he left.

One day a smart looking stranger got off the train and went over to Mr. Peel's hotel. At once Mr. Peel got interested and would hardly leave the stranger long enough to attend to any business. The stranger started on a stroll, so Mr. Peel started along behind. When the stranger would meet some one and stop to ask some questions, Mr. Peel would draw near, and stand by with his ears wide open listening, trying to catch something that would give him the information that he was almost dying to know.

The first man the stranger met was a countryman

with a little bull cart, with one barrel on it. The stranger stopped and asked the countryman, "What have you got in your barrel?" "Turpentine."

"What are you going to do with it?"

"Going to sell it to the 'stillery."

"What's he going to do with it?"

"Going to bile it I s'pose."

"What does he bile it for?"

"To get the sperits out'n it."

"What's he going to do with the sperits?"

"Damfino."

"What's left when he gets the sperits out?"

"Rosum."

"What do they do with rosum?"

"Sell it to the Yankees, I guess."

Mr. Peel was standing near, listening to all this talk, but could get nothing out of it at all to satisfy him.

The stranger went on to the blacksmith shop and stopped and asked the blacksmith (who was shoeing a horse):

"How many nails do you put in each shoe?"

"Sometimes six, sometimes eight," said the blacksmith.

"Do horses go to bed with their shoes on?"

"I guess so."

"Do horses have corns on their feet like folks?"

"Yes, they do."

Mr. Peel was standing near with a troubled look on his face, for he could make out nothing from all this talk.

The stranger went on further, and met a nice looking man with a white neck tie and a double breasted Prince Albert coat. The stranger stopped and asked:

“Are you the preacher of this town?”

“Yes sir.”

“Do you believe in eternal punishment?”

“The Scripture clearly teaches it.”

“Do you believe in infant damnation?”

“Well, I don’t know about that.”

“Do you believe in the atonement?”

“Well, the Scripture clearly teaches that.”

Mr. Peel was standing near, taking all this conversation in, but could make nothing of it.

The stranger went on back to the hotel. He sat down and Mr. Peel came in and sat down near him, looking at the stranger in such a longing way. Both sat quite still for some time. At last Mr. Peel could not stand it longer, so he leaned over toward the stranger and said in his most winning tones:

“I can’t make it out at all. I can’t make it out at all.”

“Can’t make what out?” said the stranger.

“I can’t make out what you do for a living.”

“Now, you think pretty well of me don’t you, Mr. Peel?” said the stranger.

“Yes,” drawled Mr. Peel.

“Well, I have not done anything to make you think less of me, have I, Mr. Peel?”

“No,” said Mr. Peel.

“Well, I prefer to keep to myself what I do.”

This did not squelch Mr. Peel, who still gazed at

the stranger with such a yearning interest. At last Mr. Peel said:

"Are you an insurance man?"

"No."

"Are you a lightning rod man?"

"No."

"Are you a book seller?"

"No."

"Are you a revenue officer?"

"No."

This was very discouraging, but it did not stop Mr. Peel. After a long wait in silence, Mr. Peel said:

"Well, I'll be gol darned if I can make it out at all, Mr. Man, what in the world do you do for a living?"

"Now, look here, Mr. Peel, I don't mind telling you what I do, as you are so anxious to know, but you must swear to me that you will never tell a soul on earth what I tell you; swear?"

"W-e-ll, I won't tell anyone," said Mr. Peel.

"Well, I am a gambler," said the stranger.

"A what?" said Mr. Peel.

"A gambler," replied the stranger.

"Well, I'll be gol darned, what do you gamble on?"

"Anything, everything. Here is a pack of cards. I will bet five dollars that I can turn Jack every time (flipping up a Jack), will you take that bet?"

"No, I can't bet, I belong to the church."

"Well, here are some dice. I will bet you ten dollars that I can turn sixes every time (throwing the dice on the table). Will you take this bet?"

"No, I can't bet, I belong to the church."

"Well, there are two lumps of sugar, that one is yours and this one is mine. I'll bet you twenty-five dollars that a fly will light on mine first, will you take that bet?"

"No, I can't bet, I belong to the church."

After this the stranger quieted down for some time and looked away off into space. At last he spied the clock. He then said to Mr. Peel:

"Mr. Peel, did it ever strike you what a difficult thing it is to put your mind on one thing and keep it there for one hour?"

"Well, I don't know as I ever did."

"Now, there is that clock, with its pendulum going backward and forward (pointing his finger and following the pendulum of the clock), here she goes, there she goes, here she goes, there she goes. Do you think you can follow that pendulum with you finger for one hour, Mr. Peel?"

"Well, that is dead easy," said Mr. Peel.

"Well, I will bet you fifty dollars that you can't."

"Well, I'll be gol darned if I don't try you once," said Mr. Peel (pulling out his money and throwing fifty dollars on the table). The stranger put a similar amount on the table and said:

"Now, Mr. Peel, let us understand each other. If you keep your mind on the pendulum of that clock and follow it with your finger for one hour, the money is yours, if you let your mind wander one moment and forget to follow that pendulum with your finger, you will lose your money. Do you understand that?"

"Yep."

"All right, it is just half past nine now, you can commence." Mr. Peel pointed his finger at the pendulum and followed the motion, saying:

"Here she goes and there she goes, here she goes and there she goes, here she goes and there she goes."

The stranger said, "I believe I will just take that \$100.00 and take a walk."

Mr. Peel got a little anxious, but stuck to his job. "Here she goes and there she goes, here she goes and there she goes."

About this time in came Mrs. Peel. She looked at Mr. Peel for a minute trying to make out what was going on. Mr. Peel got a little madder for he thought his wife was in collusion with the stranger to win his money, but he stuck to his job.

"Here she goes and there she goes, here she goes and there she goes."

Mrs. Peel said, "what on earth are you doing, Ira? What in the world are you doing? Stop that, stop that, I do believe the man has gone crazy."

She rushed out. Mr. Peel stuck to his job. Here she goes and there she goes. In a few minutes in came Mrs. Peel with the family doctor. The doctor walked up to Mr. Peel, taking his other hand. All this made Mr. Peel get madder than ever, but he stuck to his job. Here she goes, there she goes, here she goes, there she goes.

Mr. Peel's eyes looked glassy, saliva was running down his mustache, he looked like a wild man, but he stuck to his job.

The doctor said, "Mr. Peel, calm yourself, calm yourself."

Mr. Peel paid no attention, stuck to his job. Here she goes, there she goes. Here she goes, there she goes. Here she goes, there she goes.

The doctor turned to Mrs. Peel and said, "I do believe he has gone crazy. Get me some scissors, get me soap, get me a razor. I will shave the hair from the back of the neck and put a mustard plaster on the back of his neck and will try to save his life."

Mrs. Peel got all the things the doctor needed.

The doctor went on putting the mustard plaster on Mr. Peel's neck, but this did not stop Mr. Peel; he stuck to his job.

"Here she goes, there she goes. Here she goes, there she goes. Here she goes, there she goes.

At last as half past ten o'clock arrived Mr. Peel said, "There, by gum, I have won! I have won the money!"

"What money?"

"Why, I bet that stranger fifty dollars that I would follow the pendulum of that clock for one hour, and I have done it."

"Why, that stranger left on the ten o'clock train," said Mrs. Peel.

JESSE'S MASTERPIECE.

At a meeting of the salesmen of a Lightning Rod Company that I am working for in the town of Greenville, S. C., one of the salesmen named Lipscombe told a story about his efforts to sell lightning rods to a Mr.

P. G. Stewart who lived about eight miles southeast of a little town called Pendleton. Lipscombe said that old man Stewart was the toughest proposition he had ever struck. He said Mr. Stewart was a well to do farmer, that he owned a mill and was also running a country store. Mr. Stewart had plenty of money to pay for the rods, but did not seem to want them. Lipscombe said he had appealed to Mr. Stewart in the most eloquent fashion, to influence him to buy the rods, but to no avail. Mr. Stewart did not seem to want the rods. Lipscombe had explained the best way he could, all about how the metal rod was a conductor of electricity, and if the lightning should strike the house the rod would be a protector. Nothing Lipscombe could say seemed to make an impression on Mr. Stewart, so Mr. Lipscombe drove away without selling any lightning rods to Mr. Stewart. He said he did not believe there was a man living who could sell a lightning rod to old man Stewart.

Lipscombe had hardly stopped talking before another salesman named Grubbs spoke up and said:

"Why, that old man you are talking about is the same old cuss I spent a whole day with, trying to sell him a rod. I knew right away I could not do anything with the old man, because he had a mouth like a slit in a board, and a chin like the end of a brick, so strong and square, then the upper back of the head run to seed, so I knew that he was as stubborn as a mule. I didn't fool away much time with the old man, I went for the old lady. I told her every story of damage done by lightning that had been pub-

lished in the papers all summer. I knew by heart all these stories, and rattled them off with all the harrowing details, till I had eighteen already dead and about twenty more ready to kill, if the lightning would only hold out. I had the eyes of the old lady bulging out, and looking as big as saucers. I knew I had her all ready to say yes, that she wanted some lightning rods, when old man Stewart came in. As soon as he looked at his wife and saw the look of terror on her face, talk about demons, well, you just ought to have seen old man Stewart! He did not say much, but what he said was right to the point. He said, 'What you skeering my old woman for? This here house has been standing here for twenty-three years, and the Lord has not struck it yet, when He does get ready to strike it, your little rods will do no good.' This is all he said, but he pointed toward the front gate with his forefinger, and I looked at that square jaw of his, and his mouth was shut like a steel trap, and I understood exactly what he meant, so I said, 'Goodbye to you all.'"

Another salesman named Bagwell, spoke up and said:

"Well, don't this beat anything you ever heard? And just to think I was at old man Stewart's last Sunday, spent the day with him and went to church with his family! Did you see the pretty daughter? Why, I am dead gone on her. I never spent a more pleasant day in my life. They just fed me on the best the farm afforded, and the old lady, ain't she lovely? Why do you know she noticed a button was

lost off my coat. She looked up a button to match and sewed the button on my coat for me. The old man talked about everything he could think of, except lightning rods, but I thought that was because it was Sunday and he was too religious. So I kept my mouth shut on lightning rods, but I fully expected to sell him on Monday morning, but when Monday morning came, the old man was up and gone before I got out of bed. So when I came down to breakfast and learned that he was gone, and also learned that two other lightning rod men had been there during the month, I felt like two cents."

Grubbs said he would just like to see the salesman that could sell old man Stewart a lightning rod.

Then the manager of the company spoke up and said there was a salesman in the company that could sell rods to old man Stewart. Lipscombe said that he had just fifty dollars in his pocket to bet that no salesman in the company could sell old man Stewart any rods.

The manager said, "Well, I will just take that bet, just to teach you how to take better care of your money."

So the bet was made and the manager picked me out to sell the rods to old man Stewart.

I said I hardly thought it was fair to expect me to sell rods to Mr. Stewart after three other salesmen had spent so much time on him and failed. I thought that Mr. Stewart would be more prejudiced now than he was before any one had talked to him on the subject, and I preferred to put in my time in a way that

would be more profitable to me than wasting my time and talents on a man like Mr. Stewart.

Mr. Gugherty, the manager, said, "Go on, Jess, you can sell him all right, and to make it more interesting, I will give you the money won if you sell the rods." The fifty dollars sounded good to me, so I asked how much time would be allowed me in which to sell the rods. Lipscombe said I could take till Judgment day if I wanted it, only it would postpone the settling of the bet too long. So, after much talk it was settled as to the time, and I was given three days to accomplish what was considered the impossible.

At last after much persuasion I was almost bantered into trying my skill in the case, so to please the manager and to get the fifty dollars extra, if possible, I undertook to sell the lightning rods to Mr. Stewart.

I borrowed a white man as a helper, as my man was a negro. I told this man that we would drive down within three or four miles of Mr. Stewart's house, and he would stop and stay till the next afternoon. He must then come on down to Mr. Stewart's and get there just in time to stay all night. I would go on to Mr. Stewart's on foot and would get a job with him if I could.

I said to the helper, "when you come to Mr. Stewart's you must not know me. It makes no difference what you see me doing, don't you laugh, or show any signs of recognition. You simply ask for the privilege of staying all night, and say that you are willing to pay for your lodging. The following morning you will know whether I have sold the rods or not."

Well, we went on down to the neighborhood where Mr. Stewart lived. The wagon with the helper was stopped about three miles away, and I went on foot to get a job with Mr. Stewart. When I got to his house, I was told that he was down at the mill. I went on to the mill and found him there at work on a mill wheel. He was a great big man, with a clean shaven face, and his face was as red as blood, and looked as if the blood would pop out of the skin. He was stooping down making some marks on a big piece of pasteboard. He raised up and took a good look at me as I spoke to him. I did nearly all the talking. I told him I wanted a job to make some money, so that I could get back home, for I lived in North Carolina. He asked me what I was doing down there. I told him I went down with a man with some horses and expected to hold my job longer, but here I was laid off with little money in my pocket, so I had to go to work. What could I do? Well, most any kind of light work as I was not very strong. I had had chills for about eighteen months, and was not in the best of health, though I hoped in that high climate, and working out of doors, I would get strong, and then could do better work.

This little speech must have made some impression, the truth always makes an impression, and I stuck to the truth. Mr. Stewart wanted to know if I knew anything about water wheels. I said my father was interested in a mill once and I had seen the workmen build a wheel much like the old wheel he had there, though I thought the buckets on my father's wheels

were deeper than the buckets on his wheel. He said that was exactly what he wanted, a wheel a foot wider than the old rotten wheel in front of us, and he wanted a wheel one foot in diameter larger than that one, and he said, "there ain't a man in this whole county that has got sense enough to get up the patterns for such a wheel, or to build it." He said he would have to send to Columbia to get a man to build the wheel for him. I said I was hardly able to do the sawing, chiseling and boring that would be necessary in building such a wheel, but if he would furnish me a man who could handle tools, I would lay off the work as it was needed and I thought we could build the wheel all right. This pleased Mr. Stewart greatly, and I started right in measuring up the old wheel, taking down on an envelope the figures of the width, the diameter, the depth of the buckets. With all these measurements I asked for some clean boards to draw the patterns on. There was plenty of lumber and a number of niggers to do the work. In a short time with chalk and pencil I had started to laying the patterns for the wheel. I put a stake in the ground and with a cord I made an improvised compass that would make a circle about eleven feet in diameter. I soon had the proper size circle by a few trials, and in a little while I had the end section of the wheel sketched on these new planks that I had arranged on the ground for the purpose. As soon as Mr. Stewart saw this, he showed pleasure in every part of his face. The look of "I will do it, or die trying" passed away, and in its place there was a look that said, "the Good Lord is

mighty good to me." I was much pleased with the progress that I had made with the pattern of the wheel, and much more pleased to know that I had pleased Mr. Stewart, and had gained his friendship. We took our lunch at the mill. I hardly took time to eat, but was right back at work on the patterns of the wheel. The other men lounged around for an hour or two, for the day was warm.

Before night I had finished all the drawings, full size, so the balance of the work was for the man with the saw, the auger and the chisel. Mr. Stewart praised me and said that was the best day's work that he ever saw done. We went on up to the house. On the way he asked how much wages I wanted. I told him to wait and see what I was worth to him. I went on out to the barn or stables with him and helped him look after the stock. While we were standing in the lot, I heard the rattle of chains, and the snap of wagon wheels and the patter of horses' feet, and looking up there was my man with the lightning rod wagon. The man got down and asked if he could stay all night. Mr. Stewart said, "Yes, I guess so," and asked me if I was too tired to help the man with the horses. I was nearly ready to drop in my tracks, but said "no, I am not too tired for that." When I went to the wagon, the man commenced to giggle and said, "You seem to be getting along very well." I said, "shut your mouth, you forgot what I told you. You don't know me at all."

"The H—ll I don't know you!"

About this time Mr. Stewart came toward us, I

thought he heard what the man said, but he did not. We carried the horses to another stable away from the farmer's horses. I said to the man, "Now look here, I am trying to win that money and don't give me away, and I will give you ten dollars out of the fifty." This fixed him, so from this we were strangers. We ate our suppers; the man was sent out to a little house in the yard to sleep and I was put to sleep with a little boy. I was so tired and sleepy I could hardly sit up, but knew I had to lay the foundation for selling the rods before I went to bed, so I started to tell a story about when I was a telegraph operator. I explained all about an electric battery, how it was made, and mentioned all the chemicals used, told how certain metals were better conductors than others, and how a coil of copper wire, charged with electricity would become a magnet, and explained how this principle was used to build telegraph instruments, explained how, by cutting the wire in two, the electric current was stopped, and how, when the wire was joined together again, the electric current would flow, fill the coil and the coil would become a magnet again.

Then I explained a telegrapher's key, how the key could be rattled up and down, and would make a quick sound that we called a "dot" and a slower stroke that would make what we called a "dash," and with these "dots and dashes" we composed an alphabet.

That a "dot and a dash" was "a," a "dash and three dots" was "b," and "two dots, a space and a dot" was

“c,” and a “dash and two dots” was “d” and so on through the alphabet.

As I looked at Mr. Stewart and all the family sitting around, I saw that my effort was greatly appreciated, so I went on to my master stroke, the one thing that I knew would sell the lightning rods if anything could sell them.

I told about sitting in my telegraph office when a lightning storm was on the wires, and about the lightning coming in on the wires, burning up the paper on the table, knocking me out of my chair, and injuring the instruments, so I said this taught me a lesson. I said after this I would always put on my ground wire, and this carried the electricity down in the ground.

Then I told him about the lightning striking a cedar tree in the yard at my old home. It tore the bark off for a distance down toward the ground; a trace chain was hanging on a limb, and when the lightning or electricity got where the chain was it left the tree and went on the chain to its lower end, then jumped and tore the bark off all the way to the ground.

By this time the whole family, Mr. Stewart included, knew exactly how a lightning rod would protect a house. I said nothing about rods, but bid all good night and went to bed. I slept well and was up early the next morning. When we went down to the barn, Mr. Stewart asked the lightning rod man, how much it would cost to put rods on his house? The man said he would figure on it. The truth was he could not figure at all, so Mr. Stewart discovered that the man

was slow at figures and turned to me and asked if I could figure it up for the man. I looked up at the chimney and asked how high it extended above the top of the house? Mr. Stewart said about ten feet. I asked the rod man how high he would run the rod above the top of the chimney? He said about six feet, so I commenced adding feet together, saying ten and six is sixteen, and how far in the house is the chimney?—about ten feet, and ten makes twenty-six and for the bend around the eaves of the house, six feet, and six, makes thirty-two, and twenty feet to the bottom, makes fifty-two feet, and to the ground four more feet, makes fifty-six feet, and six feet down in the ground makes sixty-two feet, or about this, at 35c per foot, makes \$21.70 and \$3.00 for a point makes \$24.70 for one rod, and three rods three times \$24.70, which makes \$74.10. Mr. Stewart said that was right, and the man could go on and put the rods up. The man asked for somebody to help him, so Mr. Stewart asked me if I could spare the time from the mill wheel to help the man. I thought I could, and I did, so we put rods on the residence, on the barn, on the gin house and the mill. The total amount of the bill was \$247.70. After staying three days, I told Mr. Stewart as we had made no bargain about my work, and this man was going right back to my home in North Carolina, that if he would let me off I would like to go back home to see my mother; this was the truth, and there was somebody else that I was very anxious to see, too, that I did not mention.

Mr. Stewart was very kind, said he did not blame

me for wanting to go home, and wanted to pay me for the work on the wheel, but I said he'd been so kind we would call it square, so this is how I sold the lightning rods.

One of his kinsmen, hearing this story in after years when his success was assured, wrote thus:

"You are the same old Jesse who lightning rodded the South Carolina man's chimney, and could have run a rod up his back if you had felt so disposed." A good talker and worker like him did not leave many houses unprotected from the stormy elements, but made such staunch friends among the poor that even the most rudely constructed buildings had been safeguarded against lightning after a visit from Jesse. They were only too proud to do him the honor.

When he had finished these master pieces, in his own inimitable style, we bade goodbye to merriment and he took me back home.

I asked him on the way, "Why did you think I'd leave all my loved ones and go with you to the far west, without mentioning it to me first?"

"Well, I knew when I asked you at old Liberty Church that Sunday not to get married till I came back, and you did not, that you loved me well enough to go anywhere with me."

'Tis beauteous night; the stars look brightly down
Upon the earth, decked in her robe of snow;
No light gleams at the window, save my own
Which gives it cheer to midnight and to one,
And now with noiseless step, sweet memory comes,
And leads me gently through her twilight realms,
What poet's tuneful lyre has ever sung,
Or delicate pencil e'er portrayed,
The enchanted shadow land where memory dwells?
It has its valleys cheerless, lone and drear,
Dark shaded by the mournful cypress tree,
And yet its sunlight, mountain tops are bathed,
In Heaven's own blue, upon its craggy cliffs,
Robed in the dreamy light of distant years,
Are clustered joys serene of other days.

—JAMES A. GARFIELD.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

HOW MY MOTHER DISPOSED OF US.

The next morning at breakfast my mother looked so sorrowful, like she had spent a sleepless night, and even Aunt Pallas was so unusually serious looking, that I felt my fate was decided.

Jesse came very early, as he was leaving that night, and said he must see me as much as possible in the short time left us. He did not want to see me or be with me more than I did him, even though we might be asked to part for good. He was the sunniest hearted boy the Lord ever made, and the most forgiving. He met my mother like she were his own, and said,

“Well, Mammy, what have you decided to do?”

“I have decided not to stand in your way for happiness, but you must promise me when you leave for St. Louis this time, that you will not write or try to see Laura again in two years. This will give you both time to know your own mind, and another very important thing, whether your business will succeed or fail. If you love Laura as much as you seem to think now you do, you would not want her to suffer privations in a distant land, where no relative or friend is near to help. That is my decision, and, unless you do this, you will grieve me by any other course of

action. I will leave you both now to talk it over, and hope you may see the justice to both by acquiescing in my wishes."

"Mrs. Lee, you know enough of the family history in this state to know that I came of good stock, and we can trace our genealogy back to two kings—France and Ireland. From the great battle of Hastings on to the present time my father's family have been statesmen, churchmen and jurists, in England and America," Jesse proudly remarked.

"Well, Mr. Mercer, that is where you have the advantage of so many others, not so fortunate; being well born, you should start right in the world, if there is true manhood in you. Still I remember an old saying I once heard of the Washington family, 'that the best end of the vine was in the ground.' In your case I sincerely hope that your family tree may bear better fruit than ever before, by this union with my daughter, for I have always tried to instill into her mind the most exalted ideas of goodness and intrinsic worth. I note with great pleasure on seeing your 'coat of arms,' that a strong right hand is holding the cross above the crown, and I take it that as a crusader your ancestor who had that crest bestowed on him must have been a valiant Christian soldier, and I ask you still to hold that cross higher than any earthly honors. Think how many are born in obscurity, and don't know whether their 'coat of arms' would contain the 'bar sinister,' if they were rightly informed or not! Thank God, Mr. Mercer, that you reap a harvest of good deeds, and may you continue to sow a

heritage for future generations to 'rise up and call you blessed.'" My mother, after this little homily, arose and left us.

"Miss Betsey, I can't live without you two years longer. I shall need you to make a little nest for me in my new home and among new people. We can't put off our marriage two long years. It is not right to ask us, is it? We have already waited two years."

"Now, Jesse, don't hint at disobeying my mother, for we would never be happy if we did; two years are not too long for me to wait for you, if you continue to love me, and two years would be too long to live with you if you did not really love me. As the proverb goes, 'Two years will not be too long for me to get a good husband, and two years will be too long to live with a bad one.'"

"You are right, and I will do as your mother wishes, but it will be hard not to write to my little sweetheart in that time. Suppose you should grow indifferent and marry another in the meantime!" he exclaimed.

"Never fear about me," I replied, "unless another crops out like the South Carolina musician."

"Now, Miss Betsey, don't ever hint such a thing again, it is a sore subject to me, and one I don't like to discuss."

Aunt Pallas came by the window, and Jesse called to bid her goodbye, she was so much a part of our household.

"Goodbye Aunt, I am going to leave you all to-

night, for my new home, and don't let the boys steal Miss Betsey away from me, while I am away making enough money to buy her plenty of dumplings."

"That's right, Mars Jesse, don't you ever die in debt to your belly. I knows that Betsey's bin lovin' you all along, cause she's bin coming out to de kitchen ever sence you went to Souf Calliny and done nothing but talk about how purty you is, and how anxious she is to see you."

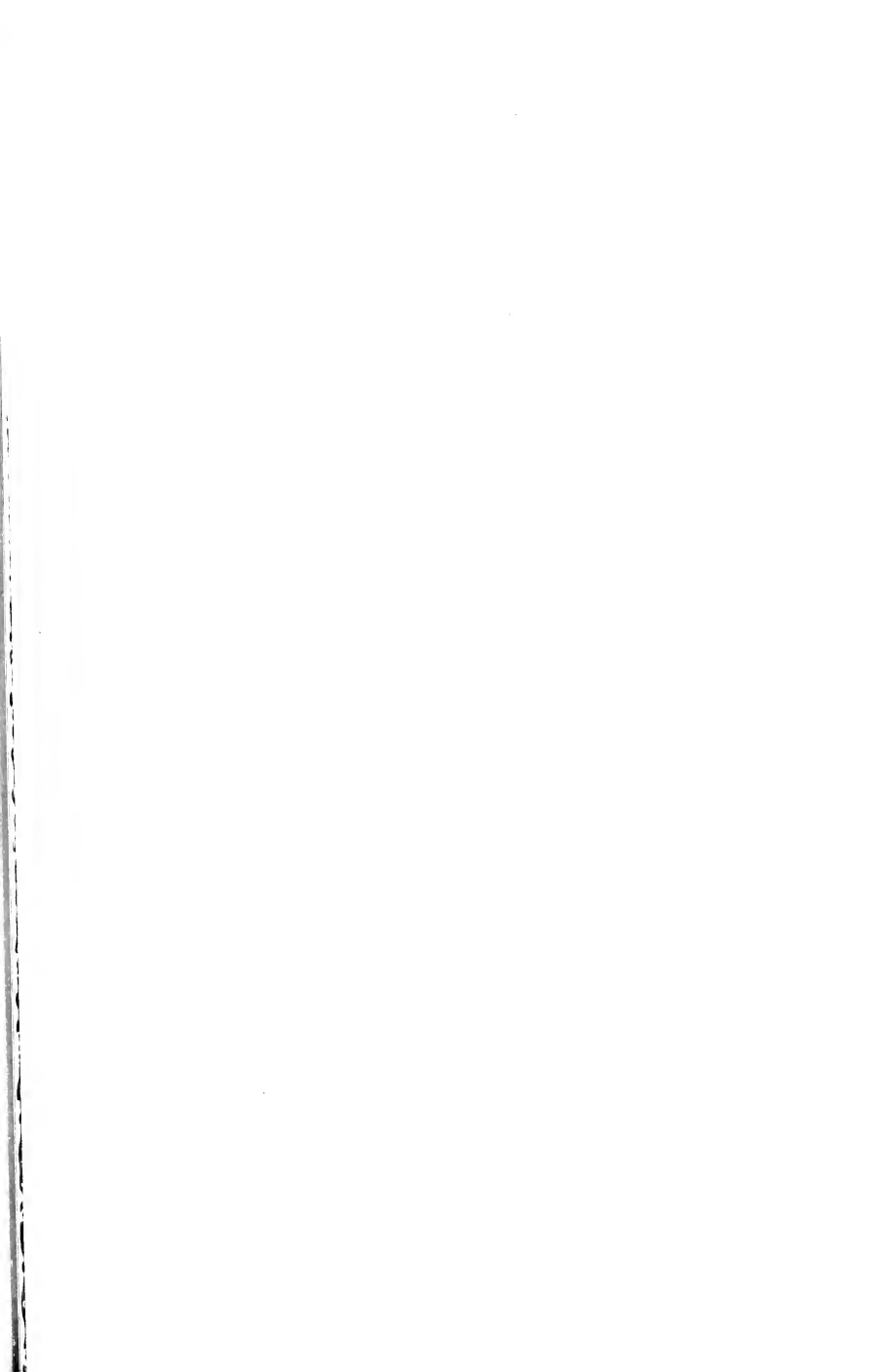
"Aunt, I cried, "I think I hear somebody calling you."

That was a sad parting for us, though he went manfully to my mother and said, "We have agreed to do as you desire. I know Miss Betsey loves you too well to displease you, but Mammy, she loves me and we shall marry some day, so don't think this forced absence will make us love one another less, it will only add fuel to a consuming fire."

Our parting is not for our readers to share, only the tiny twinkling stars were peeping at us and we were sure they would tell no tales.

"Now that our separation is near at hand, Miss Betsey, I am going to leave that name as a thing of the past. I don't like Laura, that is too cold, and I have bethought me that 'Bess' will be your name in all my thoughts, for that is nearer 'best' than anything else, until I may have the right to call you wife, the very best of all."

"What is in a name," I quoted, "a rose by any other name would smell as sweet, and your loving me by any other name would make you just as dear," I replied.



What shall I do with all the days and hours
That must be counted ere I see thy face?
How shall I charm the interval that comes
Between this time and that sweet time of grace?
I will this dreary blank of absence make
A noble task-time, and will therein strive
To follow excellence, and to o'ertake
More good than I have won since yet I live.
So may this doomed time build up in me
A thousand graces, which shall thus be thine;
So may my love and longing hallowed be,
And thy dear thought and influence divine.

—FRANCES ANNE KEMBLE.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

JESSE'S ENFORCED ABSENCE.

Henderson, the faithful Friday for Jesse, was only too well pleased to hear that he was to be allowed to go to St. Louis. The beautiful team of bays that had helped to decide our fate were sold to my brother, and I never saw them but I thought how much happiness and some suffering they had been instrumental in giving me. They seemed to look at me as if they knew it would all end happily. Sometimes we would hold sweet communion together, and wonder where our kind gentle master was, and if he were thinking about us. Such intelligence as shone from their mild eyes bespoke their instinct, and a nod of their proud heads would satisfy me that they understood and sympathized with poor "Miss Betsey."

Once in a while there would be a rift in the clouds, and a little sunshine would creep into my lonesomeness. I was bridesmaid for my dearest friends, Bettie Cox and Emma Durham, and my staunch old friend, Victor Thompson, was the groomsman, who waited with me.

The wedding of Bettie Cox and Patrick Johns was celebrated from the bride's home in Clayton. After the ceremony the bride and groom, with their

numerous attendants, drove through the country to his mother's, where a wedding feast was spread. Victor knew, as did all my other friends, that I was engaged, and he himself was very nearly so. We could therefore go together and not be in love with each other or suspected of it, as was usually the case.

"I tell you, Bettie," he said to me on the drive, "this being in love makes me feel good all over; but right here," placing his hand over his heart, "I feel something as big as a wash bowl when I think of that girl way down in Mississippi. They say we are distantly related, but I believe the only kin is that my father's dog run through her father's plantation, but I feel all over in spots, when that little girl creeps into my thoughts. How do you feel; the same way?"

"No, Vic, I can't describe my feelings, for you would not understand them, besides it would make you so sorry for me, you wouldn't feel good any more."

When I bade farewell to my old schoolmate and returned home, I was sadder than ever. In a few months more Prof. Ellington married my other bosom friend and I was left with another link broken in my life, a link that bound me to her in a sisterly way, and our friendship was closely akin to it.

Emma Durham, years before when we were barely in our teens, fell in love with our teacher of mathematics, Professor Ellington. He was one of the handsomest men in town, besides, his personality was as charming as he was handsome, and all his students were very fond of him. He was years and years

older than Emma, but age hath not power to stale such attractions as he possessed. So she said to me one morning on our way to school:

"I love Ellington well enough to die for him, Laura."

"Well, Emma, he is so handsome, and kind to us all, I am not surprised at you, for you always were different from the rest of us," I replied, "but don't set your heart on the Professor, for I have heard rumors of his being engaged to marry a Miss Smith, who is nearer his age and will make him a wife more suitable to grace his home. You know you are in short dresses yet, and he has never thought of your loving him," I cautiously ventured to remark.

"Oh, don't tell me that," and she stopped, but the tears were rolling down her cheeks when I looked at her again.

A few weeks after this conversation the Professor announced to the pupils that he intended to give up school work, and ended by saying, "I am going to be married very shortly; that is the only reason I would give up a work I dearly love, and you, my pupils, to whom I feel so attached; but I shall always look back with pleasant memories on the work we have done together."

I glanced at Emma, who was my deskmate, and saw her naturally rosy cheeks had turned so pale and white, I feared she was going to faint. Then I began to think Emma was seriously in love with our teacher. In a few days we each had received an invitation to the wedding, and were delighted to get it, except one little sad heart. She told me, "I would rather

be buried than to go to his wedding and see him married to another woman; I cannot go, it will break my heart."

The day came at last, and all the children from Clayton Academy were there in a body to congratulate him and welcome his wife to our town, all but Emma Durham (she never saw him again for years, her father moving to another part of the state).

The months rolled along and Prof. Ellington was left a widower, and in a year or two the news came that he would bring another bride to his old home to cheer his lonely heart; not hearing more than a passing rumor, it made no deep impression, for we all felt that he was not a man that could live without loving hands to comfort him, but when the announcement was made that he had married Emma Durham, my sister almost, and a friend always, the surprise was great to our townspeople, but to me it seemed to come as a matter of fact, for I felt that her love should be requited after such a blow as his first marriage, and knowing that time had only made him more dear to her, but wishing to surprise me, she had kept the marriage as quiet as possible.

All these things conspired to make me more hopeful, but other reasons helped to make me doubt whether the happiness Jesse and I had planned would ever be realized, that only a dream might be left to me, but such a beautiful one that life would never have been the same without it.

How the long days dragged "their slow lengths along." I made up my mind if I waited two years for my boy-lover, instead of going off to school as I should have done, I would stay at home with my mother, for the parting from her would surely come after that, God willing. She never urged the matter after I told her I wanted to stay with her the balance of the time.

I was placed in an embarrassing position, for as soon as Jesse left us, he told every one he met that we were engaged, and in two years he was coming back to claim me, and his parting injunction to the boys was, "Don't let Miss Betsey get too lonesome," for he was satisfied they could not "cut him out."

My sister Rilia urged my mother and myself to pay her a long visit in Raleigh, and I always thought she did that to keep me from feeling Jesse's absence so much. I had plenty of attention, and not a single young man I met permitted me to get "lonesome," so far as he could entertain me. They merely served to pass the time, but such heart longings to see my own boy lover again.

Clem Clawson, my sister's step-son, was more than kind to me, but it was like a brotherly feeling. Edwin Forrest happened to play "Damon and Pythias" while I was visiting in Raleigh. Clem was proud to escort me, and as I had never been to a theatre before he said he knew I would show I was from the country by crying.

"No, I will not cry now just to show you I can keep from it," I answered.

We reached the opera house early and watched the beautiful women, so beautifully gowned, as they entered their boxes.

The play was well staged, and Forrest was at the zenith of his fame.

As the climax was reached, where Pythias offered himself to take Damon's place for him to visit his (Damon's) wife, I heard a sob, and looking at Clem, I saw that he was deluged with tears, both nose and eyes keeping him busy. Well remembering how sure he was that I would appear so green as to cry over a play, it struck me so funny to see him, a big fellow, sitting there blubbering like he thought I'd do.

I began to laugh at him, and he continued to weep copiously, and I still laughed until I nearly had hysterics.

"I think you are the coldest hearted girl I ever saw," he said, between his sobs and snorts. That set me off laughing again as I saw his red nose and tear stained face.

"I shall never take you to a theatre again," he wailed.

"And I shall never go with a big cry baby like you either," I angrily retorted. "Look at Wesley Jones and Tom Ferrall laughing at you and wringing out their handkerchiefs as they mop their eyes like you. Just look and see, I wish now I had gone with Wesley, only you asked me first."

This conversation took place between the acts, but when the final act came and Damon received a pardon and was restored to his wife, I felt a tear had risen to my eyes for the reunion of the loved one, and I thought of the day "when two souls with but a single thought, two hearts that beat as one" should be united, never more to part.

My mother and I returned to our home, but there seemed something wanting, and I was restless. Nealie and her children helped to divert me, but never for long.

Richard came again with renewed efforts, to win or die, so did Ben and the others, but I could not bear for them to speak of love to me.

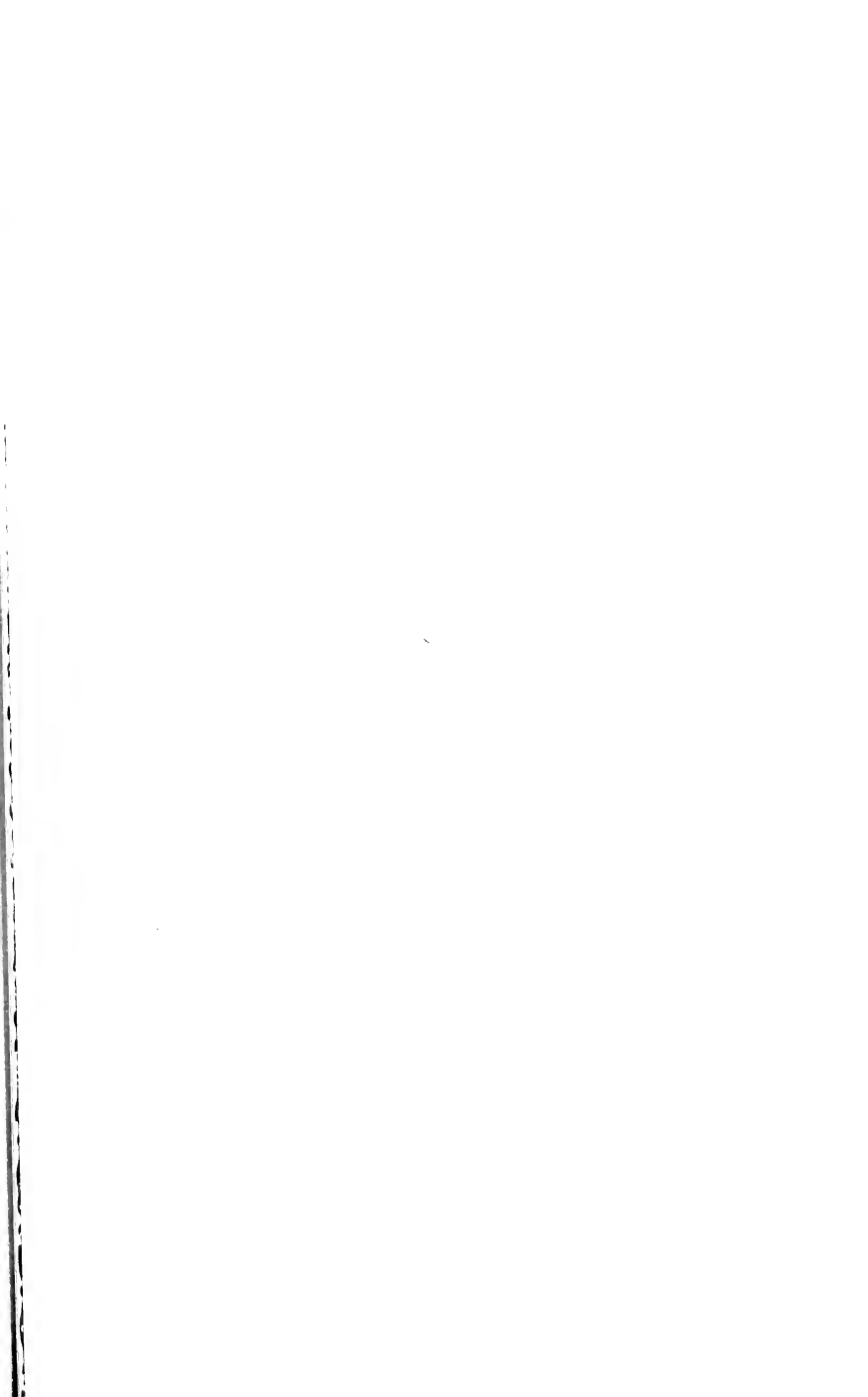
One day I met an original character and one worthy of better word-painting than my poor pen can do. She took me by the hand, and winking her left eye, jerked her head down on the same side, and with a most positive way of clinching her lips tightly together after each word, she said:

"Well, Bettie, I hear you are to marry that young lightning rod agent after two years," a wink and a nod with each word. I replied, "I hope so. We are on probation now."

"Well, you take a fool's advice and write to him to come back, and get married and go with him to St. Louis. You've heard my horn, so good bye."

Many other friends begged me to do likewise, but no, I had promised mother to wait, and I would keep my promise.

Now and then Mrs. Harrell received a few lines from Jesse, and though he felt most keenly this separation, he never once complained, but wrote such cheerful letters that they were almost like a visit from his own sunny self.



Yet why I know not, yearned my spirit to you,
Nor why for you it kept a vacant throne;
I only know it came, and that I knew you
By Love's authentic token—for my own.

—ANONYMOUS.

CHAPTER XXXV.

MY MOTHER MAKES US HAPPY AT LAST.

The letters soon showed that Jesse had been wise in selecting such a business centre and a business that was new in many ways. In the beginning it was hard work to canvass the United States, and try and impress every doctor with the virtue of the new chemical preparations or compounds, but working not alone for money and its equivalent, but working for the love of a young girl's happiness, made it almost easy to accomplish, and success had crowned his efforts from the first, and now, at the expiration of two years, he had five thousand dollars to his credit, and sufficient income to set up housekeeping in his western home. Each letter brought such good news that I was convinced more fully that our patient waiting would be rewarded, after a time.

My brother Bob who had been engaged in business in Durham fell in love with the beautiful daughter of Thomas Lyon. Her name was also Bettie, and when he wrote to us that he would give to my mother another Bettie Lee, to take my place, we all felt grateful to him.

They were married and came to live with mother, and after all I felt that kind Providence had spared

me the pang of leaving her all alone. My mother had had nothing but love and self denial for me, and had worked so hard to make things easy for me.

O, mother, you never could have done more, and might have done less, and I would have still been the better. Your love, like my husband's, shine like twin stars.

"Time was made for slaves," as I found out in the long wait, though everything comes to the patient waiter after a while.

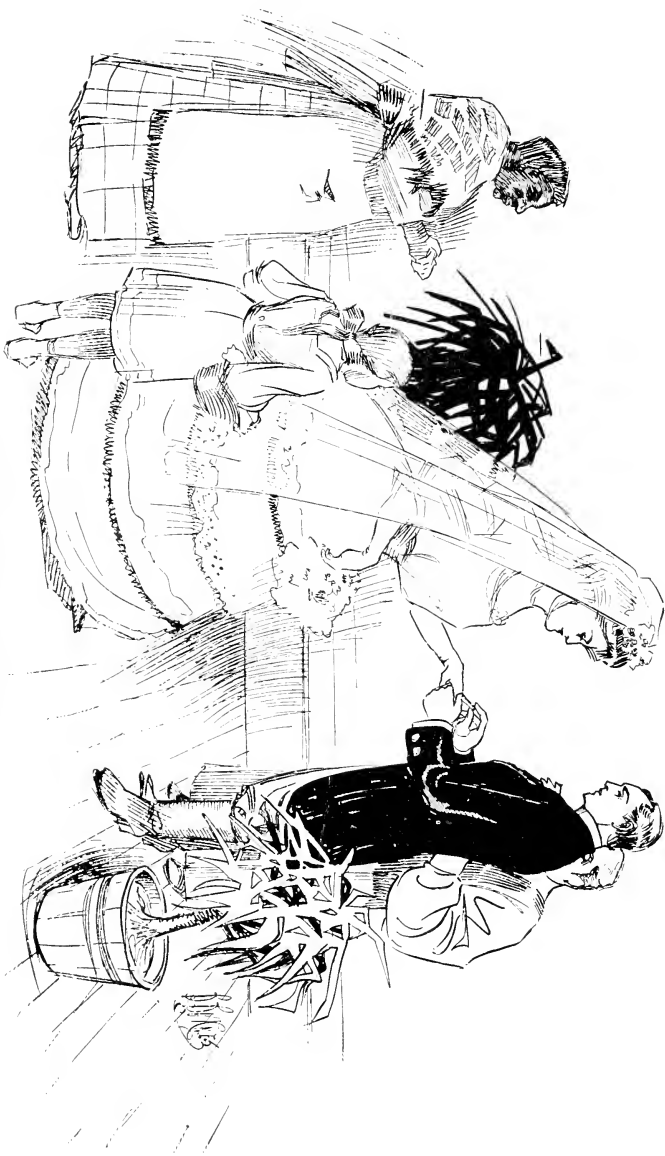
The winter came, with the gayeties usual to a small town. In March our suspense would end. I saw, each day, my mother look longingly at me, as if the dreaded time was coming all too soon for her.

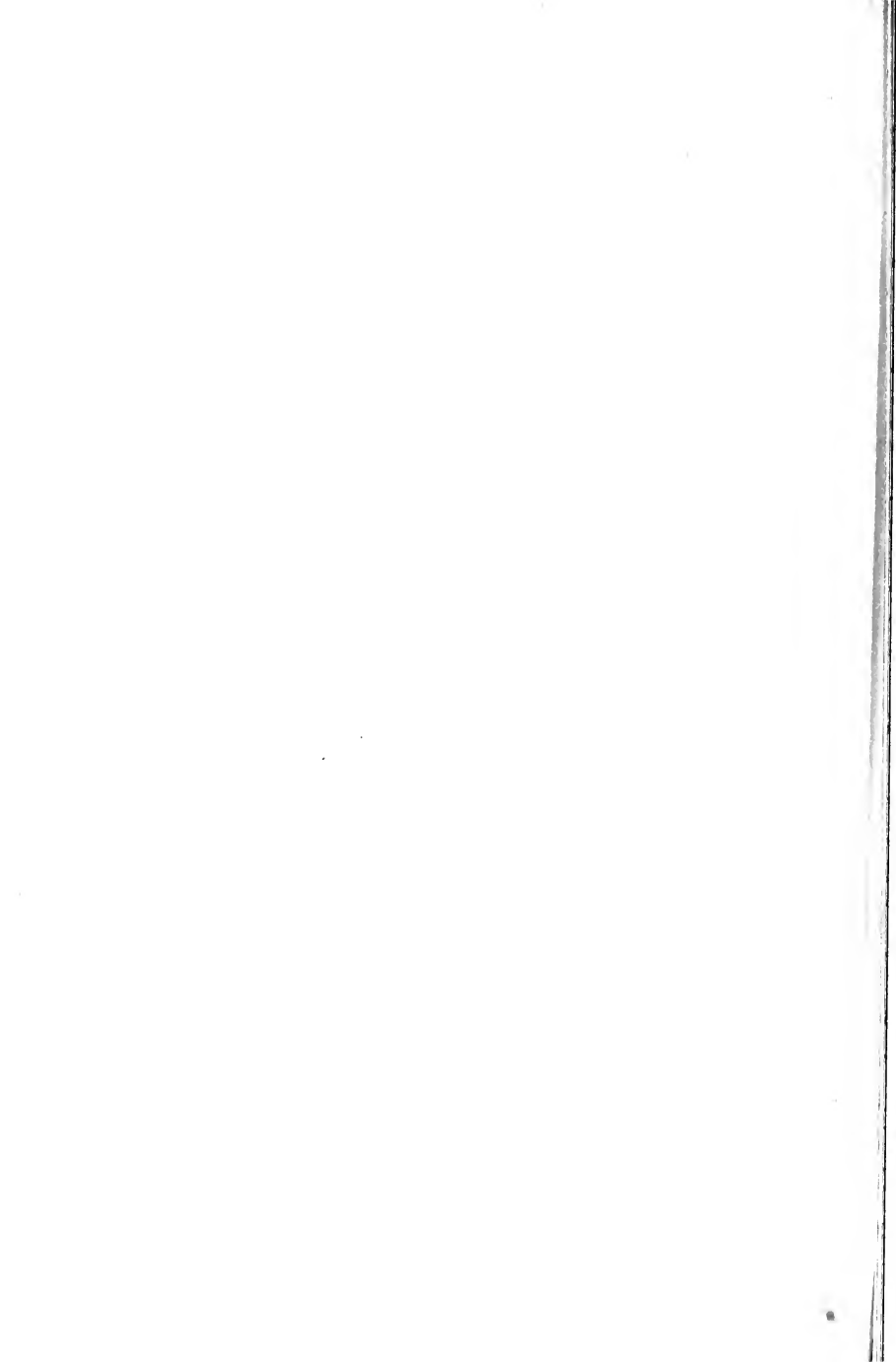
The last of February she called me to her and said, "Well done, daughter, you have won the fight, and will soon leave me. Sit down and write to Jesse, and tell him to come back, that I will not longer stand in the way of your happiness. You have been a dutiful daughter to me all your life, and you deserve to marry your first and only love. 'For love is the divine elixir that sweetens and makes life run smooth, and marriage, if happy, is the crown to any woman's life.' Write to Jesse and tell him to come back and claim his reward, for I cannot."

You may be sure I lost no time in doing as my mother bade me, and in reply received a telegram, saying that he would reach Clayton on Saturday, and we could be married on the following Tuesday.

I said, "why, mother dear, I can't be married so soon, for I have no trousseau prepared."

"Until death do us part."





“Yes, my darling child, your sisters and I have made you a lovely outfit, except of course a very important thing, your dresses, which I advise you to get when you reach your western home, for what you would get here might not be suitable for that climate. We can have your wedding gown and a traveling dress ready by the time you need them.”

“Oh, my mother, you are the best mother any girl ever had, and I don’t deserve such consideration, for I am sure I have not tried to do all for you these two years that you have been doing for me, but I do love you very dearly,” and here we both wept together, in silence. How the days dragged for me, and how they must have flown for my mother, for Saturday came, and with it my heart’s desire and love, and with Jesse came his own dear mother, an earthly saint. Our meeting like our parting is too sacred to be told here, but we two children were happy, so happy, heaven seemed to open to us after those long black years of weary waiting. When I met his sweet mother, and she took me in her motherly embrace and said, “I welcome you, my daughter, to my home and my heart; I know what my precious boy has suffered, but, Oh, you were worth waiting for;” my heart went out to her that moment, and as long as memory lasts I will continue to bear a daughter’s love for his mother.

My mother then came in, and taking Jesse by the hand and calling me to her said, “Take her, my son, and may God bless you both always.”

Then my boy-lover said, “Mammy, our home is yours and my mother’s whenever you will come to us.

There is nothing too good for my wife's mother and you above all women deserve more than we can ever do for your happiness, for your clear, farseeing judgment has kept us from committing the sin of disobedience, which no doubt would have kept us from enjoying the Eden we shall now have."

"Yes," she replied, "the Eden you have will be the Eden you make for each other."

Just then Aunt Pallas came in carrying a bundle up stairs. She asked, "how is you all?"

Mrs. Harrell answered, "The children are happy at last, Aunt Pallas."

Aunt said, as she started up stairs, "May they die," and toiling up, step after step, with the large package, reaching the top step, said, "happy."

Tuesday morning dawned fair and beautiful without a cloud to dim the brilliant azure of the heavens. We were to be married at high noon and leave at two p. m. for our St. Louis home.

Jesse's favorite niece, Margaret Rhodes, acted as bridesmaid, and my old friend, Victor Thompson, was best man.

Dr. Harrell, Jesse's brother-in-law, performed the ceremony, and when he said, "Jesse Mercer, do you take this woman, whom you hold by the right hand, to be your lawful and wedded wife, forsaking all others, and cleave only unto her?" "I will," came in clear ringing tones.

When he said, "Laura Elizabeth Lee, do you take this man to be your lawful and wedded husband? Do you promise to love, honor and obey him, forsaking

all others, to cleave only unto him, so long as you both do live?" "I will," came from a sincere heart.

Then repeating, "Until death us do part," he said, "I pronounce you man and wife; what, therefore, God hath joined together, let no man put asunder."

Then standing in the doorway, his mother and my mother, our mothers now, with blessings bade us "God speed" as we were leaving to begin a new life together in a strange land.

Now we hear the shrill shriek of the locomotive, and we are whirling away together, my boy-lover still, but always a manly man, whispered in my ear:

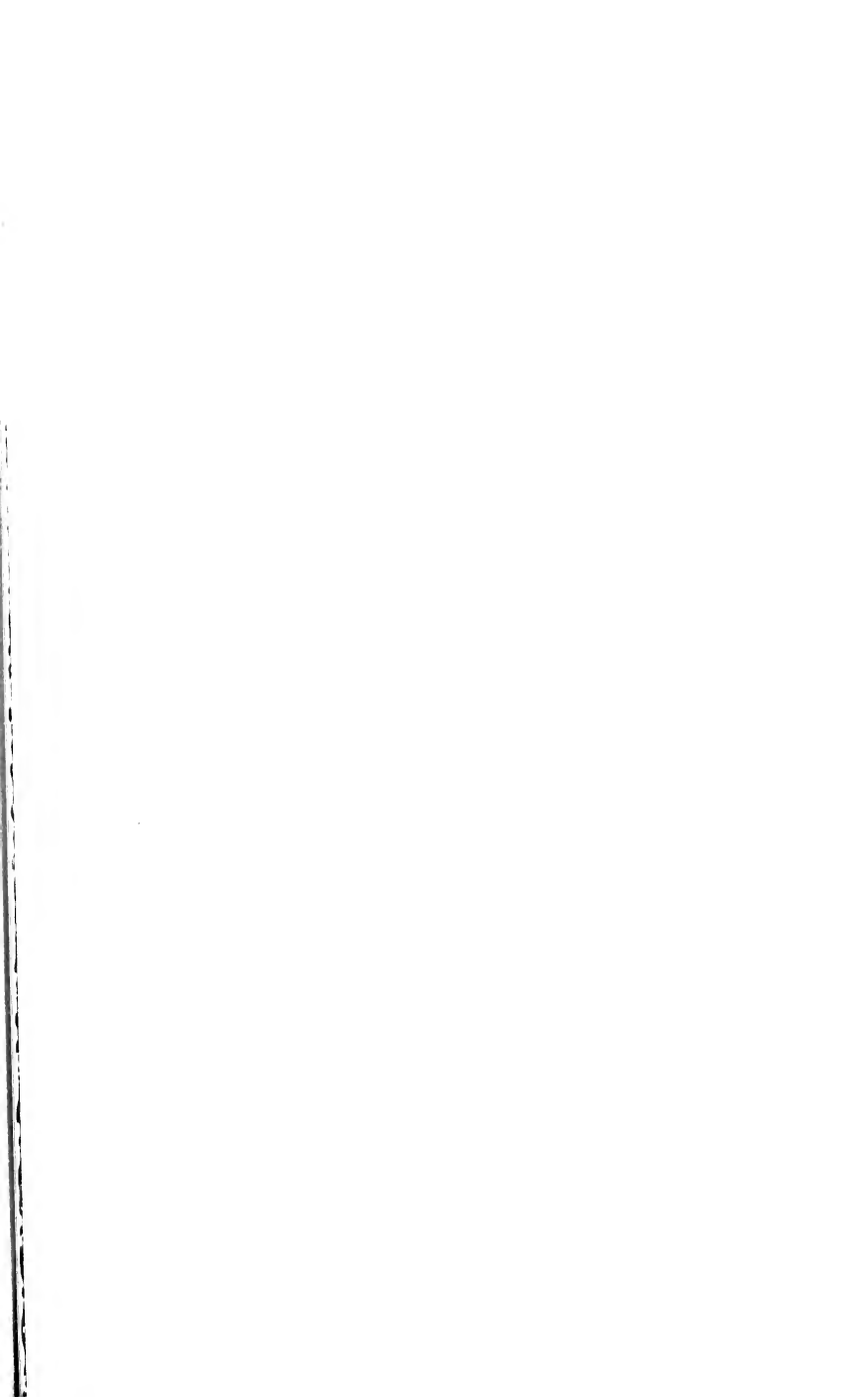
"I bless the day the horses brought me Bess and luck."

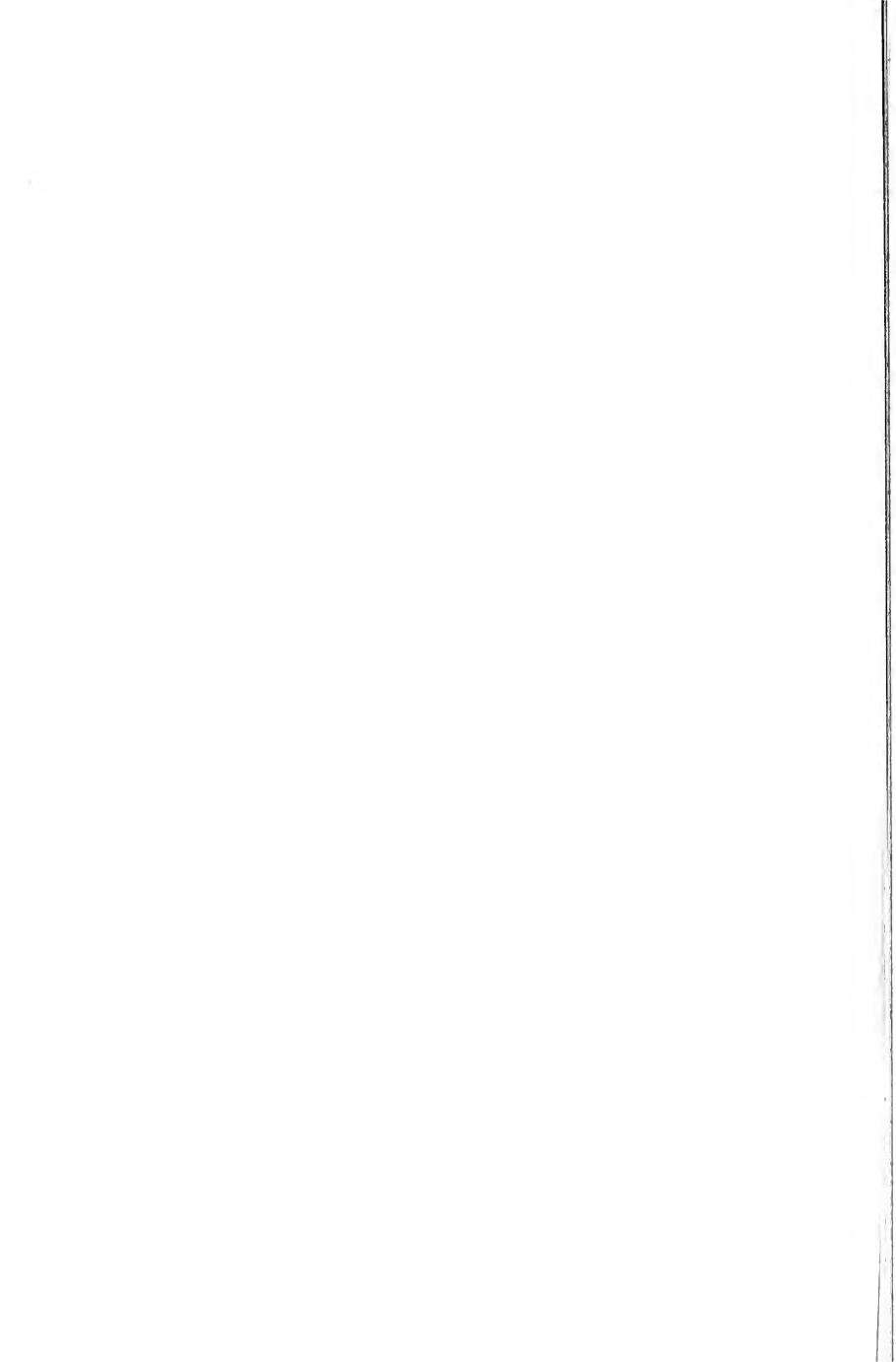
THE END.

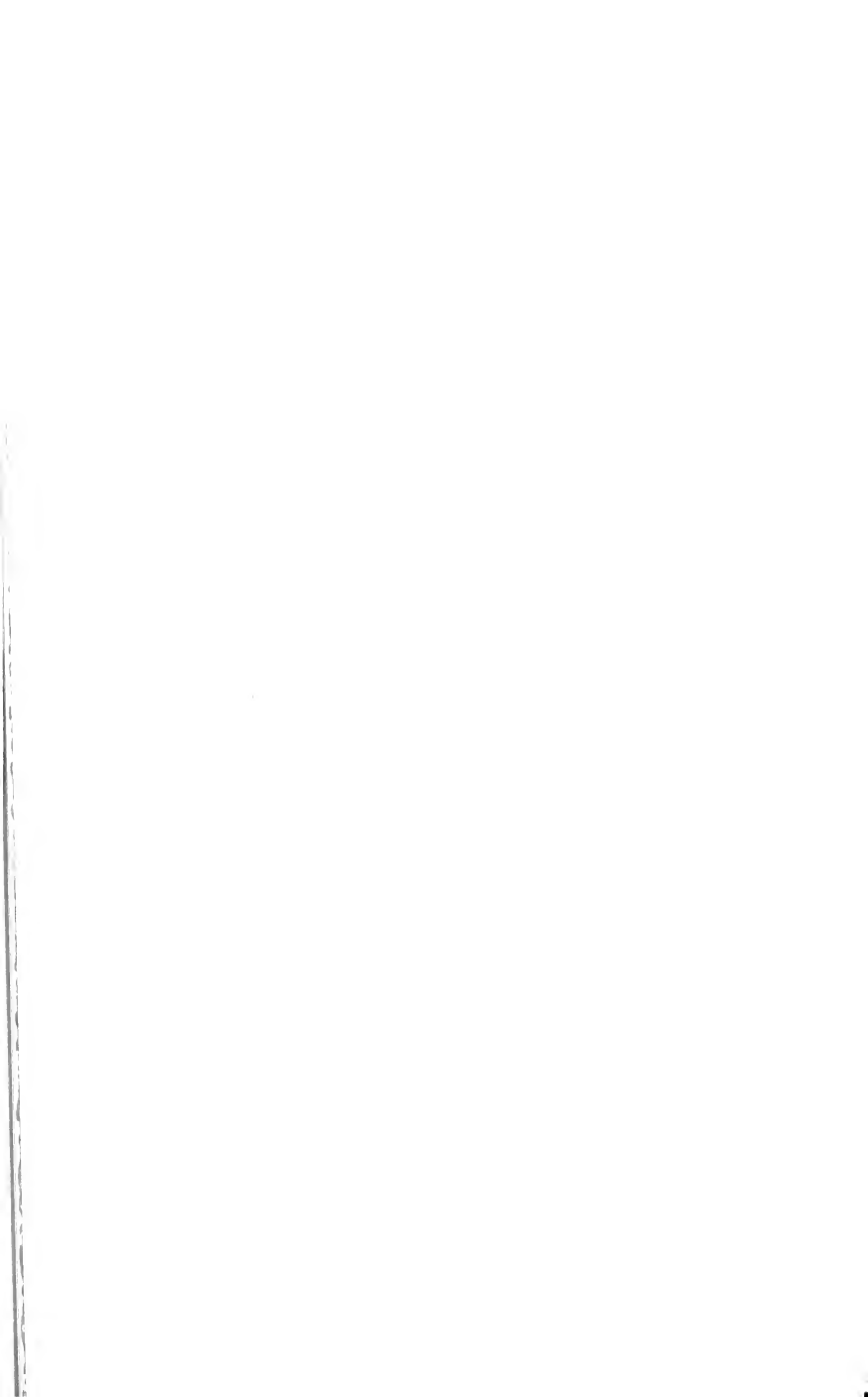
I wonder if ever a song was sung,
But the singer's heart sang sweeter?
I wonder if ever a rhyme was rung,
But the thought surpassed the meter?
I wonder if ever the sculptor wrought,
Till the cold stone echoed his inmost thought?
Or if ever a painter, with light and shade,
The dream of his inmost soul betrayed?

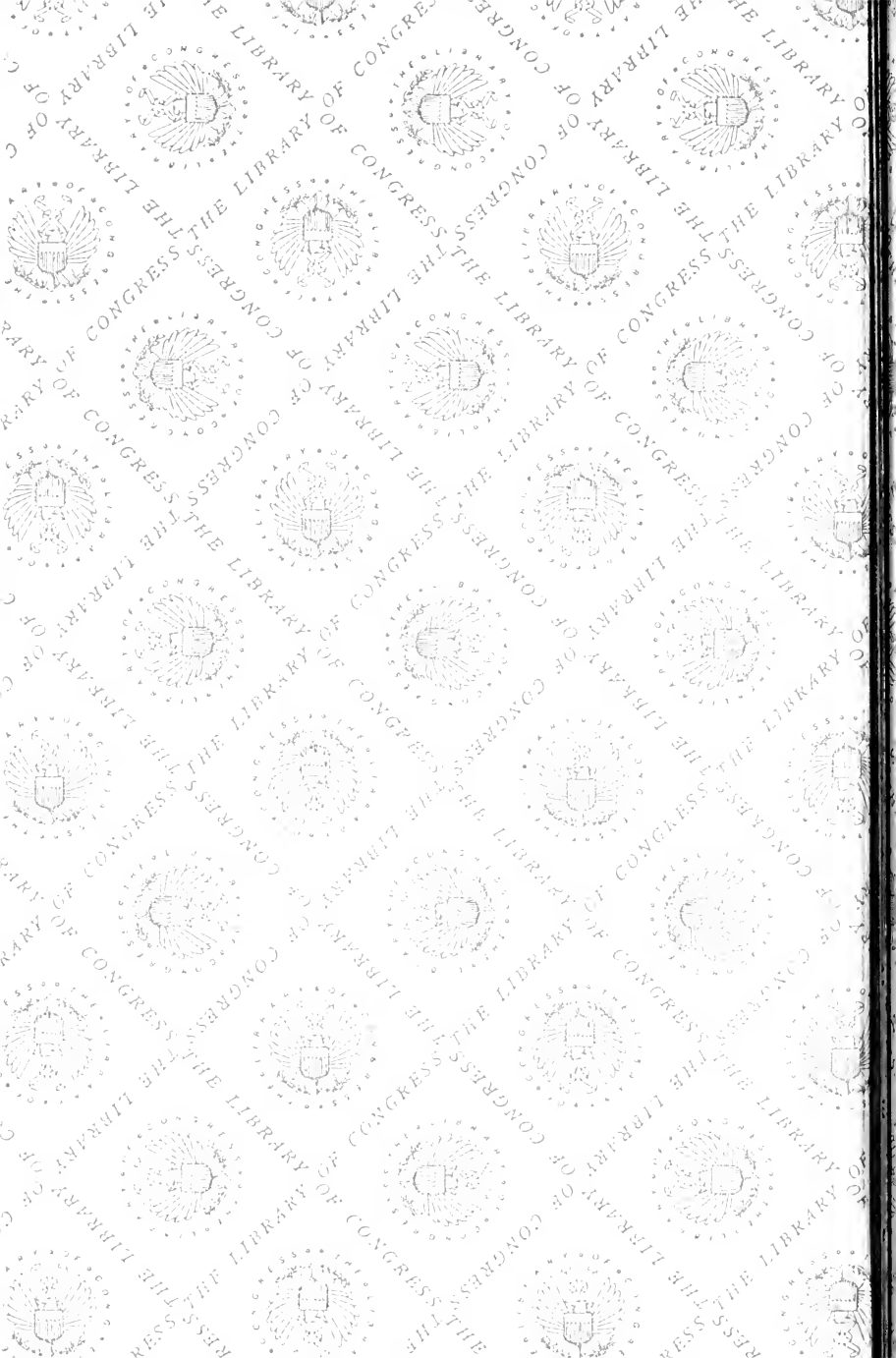
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